

UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

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**The Evolution of Golf Tourism on the South
Coast of England: a socio-economic and cultural
examination, c.1880-1939**

by

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Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES

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THE EVOLUTION OF GOLF TOURISM ON THE SOUTH COAST OF ENGLAND:
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The end of the nineteenth century and the first four decades of the twentieth century saw many changes that influenced the sporting and cultural lifestyle of Britain. This thesis investigates how and why golf tourism developed on the South Coast of England during this time. It also provides an account of the drivers, influences and motivations behind the development of golf tourism as a particular form of holiday, before demonstrating the transformational effects of golf tourism on the South Coast resorts. Furthermore, this thesis explains how the region accelerated the fashion for this particular form of holiday and broader engagement with the sport. There are several isolated articles from a national perspective by Durie, Huggins, Martínez and Vamplew, but until now, no significant study dedicated explicitly to the history of golf tourism on the South Coast exists.

The primary sources for this thesis were the archives held in golf clubs and local authorities. Visits to museums, libraries, record offices and private collections were also undertaken to collect the research material. Extensive use of newspaper archives on-line and those held in local history centres provided further significant primary sources for this thesis. Quantitative evidence was a secondary element of the research and was limited to calculating the number of visiting golfers participating in the 1930s Bournemouth Open Golf Tournaments.

The thesis focuses on six specific but often inter-related themes, rather than following a strictly chronological narrative which may have weakened it by enforcing a single timeline running through the research. The scope and context for the thesis are addressed in Chapters One and Two. Chapter Three reflects on the critical contributions made by the enablers, most specifically on how the railways and other transport providers together with hotels, encouraged the golfing holiday. Two aspects of promoting golf tourism are reviewed in Chapter Four, including the role played by marketing and a discussion of how the media reported on golf tourism. Chapter Five focuses on the role of the private members' golf clubs and their contribution to broader participation. Chapters Six and Seven discuss the aims and motivations for corporations to invest in municipal golf courses and, subsequently, the hosting of Golf Weeks. The nature of passive spectatorship is reviewed in Chapter Eight, which examines the visitor experience at The Open Championships and other major golfing events held in Kent.

The thesis concludes that golf tourism between 1880 and 1939 on the South Coast was a significant social phenomenon. Its core characteristics are based on the argument that the region benefited from its proximity to a large, affluent market of active golfers living in London and the Home Counties, and was aided by an excellent transport system. To meet this demand, the South Coast towns profited from generous and far-sighted individuals and corporations who provided land and capital to develop golf links and local tourism infrastructure. Marketing and the media heavily influenced this expansion as it progressed from simple text-based advertisements to the use of eye-catching imagery before, more recently, radio began to be used. Finally, it is contended that by the end of the period of this examination, golf tourism had started to break down the prevailing cultural barriers making golf more accessible, both physically and socially.

Contents

Abstract	i
Contents	iii
List of tables	v
List of figures	vii
Declaration of Authorship	ix
Acknowledgements	xi
Abbreviations and Acronyms used in the text	xiii
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Outlining the scope, location, period and structure.....	1
1.2 Research Context	6
1.3 Methods and Sources	9
2. Perspectives on Tourism, Golf Tourism and Golfers	19
2.1 Defining the Dimensions and Types of tourism	19
2.2 History of Tourism.....	25
2.3 Evidence of Sports Tourism	28
2.4 Who played golf in English society?	32
3. South Coast Golf Tourism: The Contribution of Transport and Hotels	43
3.1 Introduction.....	43
3.2 The Rise in Popularity of Holidaying at the Seaside.....	44
3.3 Safer and Quicker by Rail	49
3.4 Ferries and Golf Tourism.....	53
3.5 Motor-Cars and Golf Tourism	59
3.6 How Hotels Enabled the Growth of Golf Tourism.....	62
3.7 Conclusion	69
4. The Promotion of South Coast Golf Tourism in Marketing and the Media. ...	75
4.1 Introduction.....	75
4.2 How Resorts Promoted Golf Tourism.....	76
4.3 How the Railways Promoted Golf Tourism.....	81
4.4 How Hotels Promoted Golf Tourism	95
4.5 How the Written Press Reported on Golf Tourism on the South Coast	100

4.6 Radio Makes Itself Heard	103
4.7 Postcards and Cigarette Cards Providing Indirect Marketing of Golf Tourism	106
4.8 Conclusion	112
5. The Private Golf Clubs' Commercial and Sociological associations with Golf Tourism on the South Coast.....	119
5.1 Introduction.....	119
5.2 How Private Golf Clubs Invented and Profited from Golf Tourism	121
5.3 Private Clubs Slowly Adapting to Changing Social Values	134
5.4 Conclusion	145
6. Developing Municipal Golf as Visitor Attractions at South Coast Resorts... 151	
6.1 Introduction.....	151
6.2 Developments at the Seaside	152
6.3 Bournemouth and Weymouth – early golfing rivals	155
6.4 Brighton and Eastbourne – Sussex's golfing rivals	168
6.5 Portsmouth and Southsea – an ideal winter resort.....	175
6.6 Conclusion	180
7. Hosting Golf Events: A Benefit of Municipal Golf on the South Coast..... 185	
7.1 Introduction.....	185
7.2 Professional Exhibition Matches and Tournaments and Amateur Competitions	186
7.3 The 1936-1939 Bournemouth Open Amateur Golf Tournaments	192
7.4 A Social Profile of the Competitors at the 1936-1939 Bournemouth Open Amateur Golf Tournaments	206
7.5 Conclusion	213
8. Golfing Tourists as Spectators at Championship Events in Kent 1894-1938 219	
8.1 Introduction.....	219
8.2 Kent; a Brief Golfing-Geo-Socio-Economic Perspective	221
8.3 The Scale and Profile of Spectator Tourism at the Kent Opens 1894-1938.....	224
8.4 The Composition of the Kent Crowds	232
8.5 The Interaction of the Kent Crowds	241
8.6 Displays of Banal and Hot Nationalism at the Golf in Kent.	247
8.7 The Behaviour of the Kent Crowds.....	251
8.8 Catering for the Kent Crowds	253
8.9 Conclusion	256
9. Conclusion..... 263	
Bibliography..... 277	

List of tables

Table 2.1: Cost Comparison Table	36
Table 5.1: Rowlands Castle Golf Club, Green Free Income 1914-1921	126
Table 7.1: The 1939 Prize Money, Fees And Income	196
Table 7.2: The Geographical Location of Entrants for Bournemouth Open Week 1936- 1939	198
Table 7.3: Registrar-General's 1911 Social Classification Scheme.	208
Table 7.4: Routh's 1960s Occupational Classifications	208
Table 7.5: Occupational Class of the Entrants to the 1936-39 Bournemouth Amateur Opens	209

List of figures

Figure 2.1: Leiper's Tourism System	22
Figure 2.2: On The Golf Links	35
Figure 3.1: 1908 Poster For Golf At Etretat.....	56
Figure 3.2: Railway (Chemin De Fer Du Nord) Poster For Le Touquet	57
Figure 3.3: Advert For Southsea And The Isle Of Wight.....	68
Figure 4.1: Bournemouth England's Riviera By The Southern Sea.....	77
Figure 4.2: Beautiful Bournemouth.....	78
Figure 4.3: The Seaside Resort Among The Pines.....	79
Figure 4.4: L&SWR Golf Links Leaflet	82
Figure 4.5: Southern Railway Seaford Poster	84
Figure 4.6: Golfing Girl Southern Railway.....	85
Figure 4.7: Gibson Girls.....	85
Figure 4.8: Southern Railway Poster, Swanage Dorset	88
Figure 4.9: Southern For The Continent Poster	90
Figure 4.10: Leading Hotels For Golfers	96
Figure 4.11: Royal Spithead Hotel Bembridge	97
Figure 4.12: Grand Hotel Bournemouth	99
Figure 4.13: Postcard Meyrick Park Bournemouth.....	107
Figure 4.14: Postcard Greeting From Folkestone.....	108
Figure 4.15: Postcard Lyndhurst From Golf Links	109
Figure 4.16: Postcard Burley Golf Links	110
Figure 4.17: Cigarette Card Cooden Beach	112
Figure 6.1: Southsea An Ideal Winter Resort	175
Figure 7.1: 1932 Bournemouth Open Programme	188
Figure 7.2: 1939 Bournemouth Open Programme	193
Figure 7.3: Locations Of Bournemouth Golf Courses.....	194
Figure 7.4: Geographical Location Of Entries	200
Figure 8.1: 1928 Open Walter Hagen Putting.....	231
Figure 8.2: 1932 Open Gallery Walking The Fairway	231
Figure 8.3: 1930 Walker Cup Spectators At St. Georges	232
Figure 8.4: 1894 Open Sandwich	234

Figure 8.5: 1932 Open Prices Crowd Watch Sarazen Putt	234
Figure 8.6: 1904 Open Edwardian Crowd	235
Figure 8.7: Open Crowd Watch Walter Hagen	236
Figure 8.8: Open Crowd Watch Gene Sarazen.....	236
Figure 8.9: 1922 Ladies Amateur Open Crowd	237
Figure 8.10: 1932 Open Parked Cars Behind Green.....	237
Figure 8.11: 1938 Damaged Exhibition Tent	256

Declaration of Authorship

I, Paul Sheehan Wheeler declare that the thesis entitled ‘The Evolution of Golf Tourism on the South Coast of England: a socio-economic and cultural examination, c.1880-1939’ and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

none of this work has been published before submission,

Signed:



Date: 19 April 2021

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Abbreviations and Acronyms used in the text

AA	Automobile Association
AAA	Amateur Athletics Association
AGM	Annual General Meeting
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCPR	Central Council of Physical Recreation
CHA	Co-operative Holiday Association
CTC	Cycling Touring Club
<i>d.</i>	The pre-decimal penny
EGM	Extraordinary General Meeting
FA	Football Association
FOMO	The Fear of Missing Out
GC	Golf Club
GS	Golf Society
LBSCR	London Brighton and South Coast Railway
LGB	Local Government Board
LGC	Ladies Golf Club
LGU	The Ladies Golf Union
L&SWRC	London and South Western Railway Company
NCU	National Cyclists Union
P&O	Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
PGA	Professional Golfers Association
Q&A	Question & Answers
R&A	Royal and Ancient Golf Club
RAF	Royal Air Force
RAC	Royal Automobile Club

s.	The pre-decimal Shilling
SE&CR	South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company
SERC	South Eastern Railway Company
STN	Special Traffic Notices
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourist Organisation
USP	Unique Selling Point

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

‘When a man takes up golf he talks and thinks of nothing else; he regards a new golf ball as of more consequence than a new pair of shoes for the baby; and when his holiday comes he drags his unhappy family off to some out-of-the-way, deadly corner of a wilderness where there is nothing to do but play golf’.¹

‘What do they know of golf who only golf know?’²

1.1 Outlining the scope, location, period and structure.

In 2016 a study commissioned by the R&A calculated that consumer expenditure by golfers in the UK on golf-related tourism, events and accommodation accounted for £775m.³ Golf tourism can be viewed as a specific sector of the tourism industry that progresses from general holidays through leisure tourism to sports tourism; it is a highly organised international business catering for a wide variety of different golfing demographic segments. This contrasts with the first golfing tourists who at the end of the nineteenth century comprised of a small, wealthy tranche of British society, travelling independently to partake in golf at the burgeoning seaside courses on the South Coast of England or occasionally journeying across the channel to play their golf on the near continent.⁴ Through this study, I will provide answers to how the development of golf tourism had influence upon, but was also influenced by, the socio-economic, cultural, political and geographical context of the region. I will show how golf tourism helped to shape the trajectory of British society and the development of this sector of the tourism industry.

This thesis explores what the drivers and dominant influences behind this development were. I will explain how the region’s transport providers and hoteliers, together with the municipal corporations and private landowners, either in a partnership or sometimes as rivals, contributed to the laying-out of golf courses and the associated supporting

¹ A Cynic, ‘The Curse of Golf’, *Penny Illustrated Paper*, May 13 1911.

² With apologies to C.L.R James and Kipling.

³ Simon Shibli, *A Satellite Account for Golf in the UK* (Sheffield Hallam University: Sport Industry Research Centre, 2016). It was a challenge to source newer statistics as they are considered to be confidential with commercially sensitive information and so hard to access.

⁴ The *1888/89 Golfing Annual* includes details of golf courses in France (Biarritz and Pau) and Belgium (Antwerp).

infrastructure which facilitated golf tourism. Furthermore, I analyse how and why the region's private golf clubs welcomed visitors to their prized golf links. There were two main types of visitors: firstly, active participants who visited to play golf either as individuals, in competitions or as part of a collective golf society; secondly, passive tourists who journeyed to be spectators at golf events, principally The Open Championships held on three courses in Kent between 1894 and 1938.

The research provides an understanding of how all the various interested parties used marketing and the media to influence this expansion in active participation and passive spectatorism in golf tourism. The thesis demonstrates how the marketing progressed from simple text-based advertisements to the extensive use of eye-catching imagery before how, latterly, radio began to be used to publicise and persuade increased participation. A second significant finding was how national and local newspapers and the dedicated golf press also contributed to raising awareness in golf and heightened the desire to participate in golf tourism through reports of the golf played on the many courses on the South Coast.

The thesis confirms that the region enjoyed several geographic and socio-economic advantages which enabled the development of golf tourism to occur. The South Coast benefited from its proximity to a large, affluent market of active golfers living in London and the Home Counties. It was aided by an excellent transport system that provided quick and easy access to the resorts. The South Coast towns also profited from generous and far-sighted individuals and corporations who provided land and capital to develop the golf links. They organised Open Amateur Competitions, recognising that their investment would deliver economic dividends by increasing tourism opportunities and future revenue generation. I illustrate how its geography gave the South Coast a meteorological advantage over the rest of the country which encouraged year-long visits. During the summer the golfing tourist could usually enjoy the warm sun and blue skies; in winter the region was milder and dryer than courses inland or further north and so the weather and the condition of the links permitted a more enjoyable playing experience.

Finally my research displays how the increase in golf tourism made the game, that during the late Victorian and early Edwardian era was a divider and not a unifier of genders and classes, more accessible, physically and socially. I argue that by the end of

the period of my study, golf tourism had started to break down the prevailing cultural barriers. Overall this study contends that more women were welcomed to play with fewer restrictions, either as individuals, in competitions or as part of golf societies. Indeed, women experienced a more liberal environment when accessing holiday golf on the South Coast, than in many areas of female emancipation within contemporary society. Likewise, the provision of municipal courses allowed the lower-middle class and even some working-class golfers, as evidenced from my detailed analysis of participants in the Bournemouth Golf Tournaments, greater access to golf than at most urban golf clubs. This work, therefore, provides evidence of breaking down the barriers to participation for these strata of society.

At the outset three points need to be established: what I mean by golf tourism, what is the geographic reach of my research and what are the chronological boundaries that I have explored. It is widely recognised that despite recent advances, there are still notable gaps in the research into sports tourism in general and golf tourism in particular. One researcher that has focused on this field is Gibson, who divided golf tourism into three separate areas: those who go on holiday to play golf, those who attend tournaments as spectators, and those who visit heritage sites and museums. Whereas Hudson has further divided the first area in two: tourists who are travelling solely to play golf and tourists who play golf as a secondary activity while on holiday.⁵ This difference has further been described as golf tourism for the former as opposed to tourism golf for the latter.⁶ However, this thesis will consider both areas as golf tourism. While Hudson's approach has merit, it generally reflects present-day golfers and rarely applies to my period of study. The opportunity to indulge in casual, spontaneous golf as a secondary holiday activity was limited on account of the stricter access requirements and, excluding the few municipal courses highlighted in this thesis, the supply of

⁵ Heather Gibson, 'Sport Tourism: A Critical Analysis of Research', *Sport Management Review* 1, no.1 (1998): 45-76; Simon Hudson, *Golf Tourism* (Woodeaton: Goodfellow Publishers Limited, 2009), 3

⁶ Claire Humphreys and Mike Weed, 'Golf tourism and the trip decision making process: the influence of lifestage, negotiation and compromise, and the existence of tiered decision-making units', *Leisure Studies* 33, no.1 (2014): 75-95.

accommodating courses were few. Thus within my work the term, golf tourism will be used to describe all forms of playing golf while away from home.

My definition of the South Coast of England for this thesis comprises the historic counties of Kent, Sussex and Hampshire. It also embraces the Isle of Wight and the eastern section of Dorset which, excluding Weymouth, were part of Hampshire throughout the period of my study.⁷ The South Coast is at the centre of this thesis for three reasons. Firstly the importance of seaside holidays to the region has long been recognised. Farrant notes how from the end of the nineteenth century, the South Coast resorts were transformed in response to increased demand and changing needs brought on by increased levels of disposable income within the general population.⁸ Secondly, the multitude of latent golf tourists living within easy reach of the coast would have provided a large market with a desire to participate in the activity. This geo-demographic is underlined by Thompson when describing the growth of the stockbroker belt located around and including the London suburbs, full of professional men who worked in the city and could afford to travel on the extensive railway network spreading out from the capital.⁹ Finally, the number of long-established golf courses stretching along the coast from Kent to Dorset would give a sufficiently large sample size to source the necessary material. Using a simple matrix based on total numbers of courses per county, Bale identifies that Kent had 3.6% of all UK courses, being the fifth highest in the country; Hampshire had 3% (9th), with Sussex at 2.9%, (10th). This demonstrates the demand for golf courses on the South Coast with the three counties all occupying places in the national top ten.¹⁰

The thesis has not taken on a strictly chronological narrative but has focused on specific themes; it was thought that the particular topics were best explained in relative autonomy and not weakened by conforming to a single timeline running through the thesis. The chronological boundaries of this thesis can nonetheless be defined in three

⁷ Bournemouth, Christchurch and the Isle of Wight were removed from Hampshire during the reorganisation of local government in 1974.

⁸ Sue Farrant, 'London by the Sea: Resort Development on the South Coast of England 1880-1939', *Journal of Contemporary History* 22, no. 1 (1987): 137-162

⁹ Francis, M.L. Thompson, *The Cambridge Social history of Britain 1750-1950; Regions and Communities*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 47

¹⁰ John Bale, *Sport and Place* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1982), 128

distinct phases: first, the boom in golf course developing in the 1880s through to the end of the Victorian era in 1901; second, the early period of the twentieth century including World War One; and finally, what I have discovered to be the golden years of golf tourism running from 1919 to the commencement of World War Two in 1939, which acts as a distinct endpoint to this thesis. The impacts of World War Two were multiple, but changes to society, its behaviours and values quickly altered the culture surrounding golf. This was coupled with access to new forms of transport, changing the pattern of the golfing holiday to such a significant extent that it became unrecognisable compared to the experiences of previous generations of touring golfers and the institutions that catered for them.

Accordingly, my thesis is composed of six thematic chapters. After the scope and context for the thesis are established in Chapters One and Two, the critical contributions made by ambitious resort entrepreneurs and progressive transport providers are addressed in Chapter Three. It focuses on how the railways aided the boom in golf tourism through their extensive networks, while not overlooking other forms of transport, including motor-cars and ferries. Additionally, the chapter shows how hotels encouraged the golfing holiday and how it helped to extend the season on the milder South Coast. Two aspects of promoting golf tourism are examined in Chapter Four. Firstly, marketing is reviewed, including how written material and also visual imagery were employed to promote golf tourism. Secondly, the chapter discusses how the media reported on golf tourism through stories in newspapers, features in golfing periodicals and later on the radio. Chapter Five focuses on the contribution of the private members' golf club. It considers their role and perspective in accommodating golf tourism, how they welcomed the additional revenue through offering day memberships and seasonal tickets, and by hosting open competitions and golfing societies. Of specific interest is the relaxation of golf's strict rules and policies on access and membership at these courses, contributing to widening participation.

Chapters Six and Seven discuss the aims and motivations for corporations to invest in municipal golf courses as a method of attracting new, and a more socially diverse range of tourists to visit their resorts. This is framed with a narrative of local competition with rival resorts for the emerging golf tourist market. The hosting of Golf Weeks is analysed

to demonstrate how they increased demand and further broadened the nature of golfing participation by breaking down traditional social barriers. Then finally, in addition to the physical involvement in sports tourism, the nature of passive spectatorship is reviewed in Chapter Eight. It examines the crowds at The Open Championships and other major golfing events held in Kent. Attendances were assessed to discover the magnitude, scope, status and behaviour of the crowds and how this contributed to the overall visitor experience.

1.2 Research Context

Notwithstanding the work of Gibson and Hudson, Huggins laments, ‘because of the fairly scanty and sporadic interest in sports tourism by both historians of sport and historians of tourism, the body of knowledge currently available is restricted in its value and deficient in coherency’.¹¹ The majority of recent literature focuses on contemporary issues with the history of sports tourism only included for contextual purposes.

However, there is a critical lack of in-depth research which has made the history of golf tourism its primary research objective. Zauhar bemoans that this opportunity to examine the past and the notable legacy between sport and tourism has never been fully explored. He contends that a relationship exists between the histories of sport and tourism, which necessitates broader examination by academics to fully understand how they were intertwined and how they have subsequently shaped their historical developments.¹² Sports tourism is a relatively undeveloped field for academic research; it first appeared as the theme of a 1966 paper produced by Don Anthony for the CCPR that simply acknowledged the position played by sport in some people’s holiday decisions or itineraries.¹³ Although it failed to stimulate an immediate response, Anthony’s paper has now been acknowledged as a landmark document that pioneered all of the subsequent studies of sports tourism.¹⁴ It was almost two decades before significant further subject research emerged with Glyptis producing a survey on the role

¹¹ Mike Huggins, ‘Sport, tourism and history: current historiography and future prospects’, *Journal of Tourism History* 5, no. 2 (2013): 107-130

¹² John Zauhar, ‘Historical perspectives of sports tourism’, *Journal of Sport Tourism* 9, no.1 (2004): 5–101.

¹³ Don Anthony, *Sport and Tourism* (London: CCPR/ICSPE Bureau for Public Relations, 1966).

¹⁴ Mike Weed and Chris Bull, *Sports Tourism: Participants, policy and providers* (Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, 2004), xi.

of tourism in generating sports participation within Europe. Then in a new report that was written specifically for the GB Sports Council in 1992, she reviewed the interrelationships between sport and tourism.¹⁵ Any research that followed continued to be spasmodic, isolated and restricted to individual fields of study. Thirty years on from Anthony's work, Gibson criticises academics for working in their respective research silos and for failing to provide sufficient multi-disciplinary material linking the knowledge and expertise contained in sport and tourism research studies.¹⁶ Gammon and Kurtzman support Gibson, claiming that the work undertaken in this field has been academically trivial, perhaps because the studies were isolated, lacked meaningful impacts and contribute little to the advancement of comprehensive and collective knowledge or theory in this slowly maturing field. Therefore, this has undermined the legitimacy of the discipline in the eyes of many academics.¹⁷ Whether or not one accepts this view, the appearance of sports tourism-related research has increased from the early 1990s with De Kopp, Weed and Bull and Gibson all contributing to the publication of texts on the subject. Crucially, since 1995, under the auspices of the Sports Tourism International Council, a private organisation formed in Canada to promote research into Sport and Tourism, the *Journal of Sports Tourism* has provided a source of information dedicated to the advancement of scholarly knowledge in the now developing field.

An additional specialist peer-reviewed academic outlet is the *Journal of Tourism History*, but this caters for the more mainstream tourism readership. Nonetheless, it regularly includes sports tourism-related articles and has added to the quantity of research in the field. The final key development was the First World Conference on Sport and Tourism which was held in Barcelona in 2001 and was attended by the then President of the International Olympic Committee, Juan Antonio Samaranch. As with

¹⁵ Sue Glyptis, *Sport and tourism in Western Europe* (London: British Travel Educational Trust, 1982); Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, xii

¹⁶ Gibson, 'Sport Tourism', 45-76.

¹⁷ Sean Gammon and Joseph Kurtzman, *Sport tourism: principles and practice* (Leisure Studies Association, 2002); Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, xi.

much of the early academic work in the field, the conference focused mainly on impacts and management considerations.¹⁸

There are genuine concerns about academics working in silos, but sports historians have contributed to the body of knowledge from the perspective of their specialist field of research. This position is reflected by Huggins who acknowledges that while modern sports tourism is an increasingly wide-ranging scholarly field, more work is required on, particularly, the historiography of golf, rather than the mass participation sports of football, cricket or even rugby, which all have received significant research attention. He goes on to argue that many early efforts required rigorous historical examination as they were largely descriptive and over-dependent on basic sources of information. Therefore, there can be little doubt that there remains a large volume of untouched primary source material, available to underpin the development of new hypotheses and the advancement of new research areas.¹⁹

Aside from the pioneering work of Huggins on golf when writing alone or in partnership with Alastair Durie, the majority of the previous literature is subsumed in broader research that focused on sports tourism in general. This includes Durie again who discussed how golf, alongside shooting and fishing, impacted on the Scottish resorts during the late Victorian and early Edwardian period. Further related studies draw on the work of Vamplew who has written extensively about the early history of the golf club and its membership. Likewise, Holt and Lowerson focus on golf as a sport, but with only passing consideration to holiday golf or the more extensive social, economic and cultural histories as presented by Walton in his work on the British seaside.²⁰ Essentially, apart from these limited examples, the history of golf tourism has been written from the outside and few academic studies have filled this historiographical gap. Although several articles have been published, no significant

¹⁸ Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, xiii; Huggins, 'Sport, tourism and history', 107-130.

¹⁹ Mike Huggins, 'Sport and the British Upper Classes c.1500–2000: A Historiographic Overview', *Sport in History* 28, no. 3 (2008): 364-388

²⁰ Alastair J. Durie, 'Sporting tourism flowers: the development from c. 1780 of grouse and golf as visitor attractions in Scotland and Ireland', *Journal of Tourism History* 5 no. 2 (2013): 131-145; Richard Holt, *Sport and the British* (Oxford University Press, 1989); John Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle classes 1870-1917* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Wray Vamplew 'Playing together: towards a theory of the British sports club in history', *Sport in Society* 19 no.3, (2016): 455-469; John Walton, *The English Seaside Resort – A Social History 1750-1914* (Leicester University Press, 1983).

study dedicated explicitly to the history of golf tourism exists and particularly none focusing on just the South Coast of England.

Finally, studies focusing on aspects of contemporary sports events are commonplace and equally excessive amounts of research have been generated into past mega sports events. There has been little on smaller events organised by local authorities in terms of their social impact or their economic value. This research area will be combined with another gap in the existing literature, the rationale for the provision of public facilities, including golf courses, by local authorities.²¹ This thesis will show that these perspectives are not of course mutually exclusive. There appears to be a lack of studies on spectatorship, which is acknowledged to be a difficult but under-researched topic. There can be little doubt that some examples do exist, including Hill's excellent analysis of travelling FA Cup fans visiting London.²² A widening of the discussion on the composition, attitudes and behaviours of spectators at more significant golf events, including The Open Championships held in Kent, in terms of numbers, class and gender is required. This thesis will therefore concentrate on these un-mined areas.

1.3 Methods and Sources

When studying the evolution of golf tourism, many challenges have occurred regarding the lack of a consolidated or one single archive for locating the essential primary sources. Booth's recent overview suggested that the work of sports historians can be placed into three categories: reconstructionist, constructionist and deconstructionist. The reconstructionist approach aims to discover the past as it was. In contrast, the constructionist line looks to interpret how, why, then consider the patterns and trends. Finally, the deconstructionist method discovers a fragmented and partial past based on contextualisation of historical knowledge.²³ With research producing so little existing literature on the history of golf tourism, the opportunity to write a direct polemic or to

²¹ Huggins, 'Sport, tourism and history', 107-130.

²² Jeff Hill, 'Rites of Spring: Cup Finals and Community in the North of England,' in *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, ed. Jeff Hill and Jack Williams (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 85-111

²³ Douglas Booth, *The Field: Truth and Fiction in Sports History* (London: Routledge, 2005), 6

create a rebuilding review was severely restricted. Consequently, the research methodology that was adopted here was the constructionist approach; putting together an innovative and dedicated study of how and why golf tourism developed in this particular region of the country and across the time frame identified. A holistic approach was therefore undertaken and the leading sources for this thesis were the archives of golf clubs and local authorities. Visits to museums, libraries, record offices and private collections from across the region were also undertaken to collect research material and also to read local and national newspapers from across the period of my study, 1880-1939, in-situ or by on-line access to the British Newspaper Archive.²⁴ The content available at the archives varied significantly but added valuable insights into the evolution of golf tourism. In addition to minute books, there were town and tourist guides, trade directories, postcards, competition posters and programmes, correspondence, course guides, golf club handbooks and maps.

The minutes of committee meetings were scrutinised to identify emergent patterns and trends in discussions of the provision of golf and policies that were adopted to permit the widening of participation in golf, or conversely to maintain the barriers that restricted equity. The reliance on these sources was dependent on the degree of diligence of golf club secretaries in maintaining historical records for research purposes. The clubs whose archives have been accessed to illustrate a geographic and status cross-section were: Seaford and Cooden Beach from Sussex, Hayling Island and Rowlands Castle from Hampshire, Shanklin & Sandown from the Isle of Wight and Royal St. George's from Kent. These range from a club that has hosted Open Championship in Royal St. Georges to a relatively small island-based club at Shanklin & Sandown. Specific challenges included a fire destroying all the records at Littlehampton GC in 1984 or an over-zealous and tidy secretary at Shanklin and Sandown GC in the 2010s.²⁵ This thesis is partly based on a sample of these club archives and considers their contributions when forming an understanding of golf tourism. The records of local authorities were better preserved given their greater public accountability. These

²⁴ List of Archives visited: Bournemouth Library Heritage Zone, British Library, Dorset History Centre, East Sussex Records Office, Hampshire Record Office, Kent History and Library Centre, Portsmouth History Centre and Records Office, Sandwich Town Council Office, West Sussex Records Office, and four private collections in Bournemouth, Shanklin, Walton Heath and Weymouth.

²⁵ Ian Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton Golf Club* (Ribworth Beauchamp: Matador, 2016), 53

included committee meetings minutes from Borough of Bournemouth, Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) and Portsmouth City Council.

In the real absence of a central source, a range of media sources including newspapers and periodicals was also critical to this thesis. The use of the fourth estate, as it has been described or what Bourdieu called, ‘the journalistic field,’ combines the critical social and political networks to promote the editor’s message.²⁶ Polley endorses this view and adds how sports historians appreciate these primary sources as they provide accessible evidence of past events. Furthermore, Polley elaborates how these sources can show how events impacted on the lives of the people within the respective narratives.²⁷ The sports columns of *The Times* reflected their readership’s increasing interest in sport in general and golf in particular, and *The Times*, as a respected title, clearly played a critical role in golf reporting. My research therefore extensively drew on *The Times* on-line archive but also included articles from more than forty local daily newspapers that featured accounts of golf and golf tourism on the South Coast as news articles, editorials or through advertisements. The most frequently featured titles were the *Bournemouth Evening Echo 1903-2015*, *Brighton Gazette 1901-1909*, *Eastbourne Gazette 1908-1938*, *Isle of Wight County Press 1903-1933* and the *Portsmouth Evening News 1891-1937*. Besides these publications, there were local newspapers from outside of the south-east region, for instance, the *Dundee Courier* and the *Yorkshire Post* that also covered these stories. This reflects the relevance for their respective readerships and the reputation and national interest that South Coast golf tourism had throughout the country. The national and local scope of reporting provided a more balanced view, with any local favouritism balanced by more objective reports in the national and non-South Coast newspaper accounts of the events and opportunities for golf tourism on the South Coast. Alongside the newspapers, the specialist golfing press emerged and became an essential mouthpiece for the golfing establishment to use as a promotional tool to reach and then

²⁶ Martin Conboy, *Advances in Sociolinguistics: The Language of Newspapers: Socio-Historical Perspectives* (London: Continuum, 2010), 15

²⁷ Martin Polley, *Sports History: A Practical Guide* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 91-92

satisfy the interests of the golfing contingent within British society.²⁸ These yearbooks and periodicals, *Golfing Annual 1887-1910*, *Golf 1890-1900* and *Golf Illustrated 1899-1914* further provided me with a wealth of material. This included news of golfing products, reports of courses, clubs and competitions, accounts of matches and biographies of well-known golfing figures. The most relevant for my research were features on resorts that promoted holiday opportunities for golfers, together with details of local hotels and easy travel arrangements.

Reliance on such sources presented a challenge because even in the period relevant to this thesis editors were bound by their own causes and prejudices, or the reporting was often unconsciously discriminatory. Therefore, consideration needed to be taken of the political and social contexts in which such sources were written.²⁹ Leung reminds us that the validity of the data lies in the true representation of the reality it asserts to represent.³⁰ Historians must, therefore, treat some of these sources with caution, but they do provide detailed accounts of events and reports on local stories.

A useful source of reference material for golf historians carrying out research is the plethora of books written on the history of local golf clubs. Of particular note were David Dobby on Royal Cinque Ports and F.R. Furber on Royal St. George's that I used for my review of the spectator experience at The Open Championships held in Kent. The work of Bill Jon on Hayling Golf Club, Jim Price on Cooden Beach and John Walsh for Seaford supplemented the material that I retrieved from the respective club minute books. Peter Ward's book on the origins of Came Down (Weymouth) and Tom Willcocks, *The Story of Eastbourne Downs* were important titles when tracing the development of municipal golf courses. Finally, Ian Wiseman's *A Narrative of Littlehampton Golf Club*, was particularly helpful given the absence of the club's

²⁸ David Rowe, *Sport, Culture & Media: The Unruly Trinity* (Berkshire: Open University Press, 2003), 31

²⁹ Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in Practice* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2000), 187

³⁰ Lawrence Leung, 'Validity, reliability, and generalizability in qualitative research', *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care* 4 no. 3 (2015): 324-327.

minutes, lost to the fire that destroyed their clubhouse.³¹

A further literary process of enquiry, particularly when researching the cultural and social impact of The Open, was the use of autobiographies and memoirs including the diaries and letters of golfers and administrators whose careers coincide with the period. Smith, Arnold and Thelwell offer how athletes have used autobiographies for storytelling purposes and to convey their experiences to a broader audience.³² This is further supported by Taylor, who identified that there is an immense library of sports-related autobiographical material available for sports historians to use as background information.³³ However, despite Taylor's positive statement, there was a relatively small body of literature that was relevant to determining the factors that affected patterns of attendance and spectatorship. Fortunately, books written by each of the famous golfing triumvirate Braid, Taylor and Vardon did yield some interesting insights that added to the narrative from the unique perspective of the professional golfer.³⁴

Content analysis was used to highlight references on golf history and sports tourism in particular and other supporting subject areas of economics, tourism, sociology and the development of transportation. This research methodology included investigation and research into a range of periodicals, travel and town guides that catered, in season, for South Coast visitor communities from 1880-1939. These are held in the archives of records offices at Bournemouth, Brighton, Dorchester, Maidstone, Portsmouth and

³¹ David Dobby, *Royal Cinque Ports: England's Finest Links* (Frinton-on-Sea: Broadside Publishing 2011), F.R. Furber, *A Course for Heroes, A History of The Royal St. George's Golf Club*, (The Royal St. George's Golf Club, 1996), Bill Jon, *A History of Hayling Golf Club* (Hayling Golf Club, 2013), Jim Price, *The Unremitting Challenge: Cooden Beach Golf Club* (St. Leonards: Hasting Printing co., 2012), John Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club: A History* (Lindel Publicity and Promotions Ltd, 1986), Peter Ward, *Came Down to Golf* (Weymouth: Ellesborough Press, 1984), Tom Willcocks, *The Story of Eastbourne Downs Golf Club 1908-2000*, (Eastbourne Downs Golf Club, 2000), Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton Golf Club*.

³² Matthew Smith, Rachel Arnold and Richard Thelwell, 'There's No Place to Hide: Exploring the Stressors Encountered by Elite Cricket Captains', *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* 30, no. 2 (2018): 150-170

³³ Matthew Taylor, 'From source to subject: Sport, history, and autobiography', *Journal of Sport History* 35, no.3 (2008): 469-491.

³⁴ James Braid, *Advanced Golf: Or, Hints And Instruction For Progressive Players* (London: Methuen & Co., 1908), J.H. Taylor, *Taylor on Golf*, (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1911). J.H. Taylor, *Golf: My Life's Work*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1943), Harry Vardon, *The Complete Golfer* (London: Methuen & Co., London, 1905).

Winchester. The approach was to look specifically for golfing references in the marketing material, including any images and photographs that were used to attract golfing tourists to the resorts and courses, such as the advertisement posters printed by railways and content produced by hoteliers and event organisers. Huggins and O'Mahony have encouraged the greater exploration of the connections between depictions of culture and sporting history, adding although previously neglected they are now starting to receive wider scholarly attention.³⁵ Marwick affirms this view, stating that the analysis of primary sources alone does not make history, but without references to them, there is no history.³⁶

Two methods that were discounted were the use of oral histories and interviews with key individuals to access information. These were not chosen because the historical time frame of this research concluded over seventy years ago. Hence they were anticipated as unlikely to be productive in terms of generating a significant volume of useful inputs. The principle of creating a network of contacts was undertaken but this was merely a signposting exercise to suggest and locate sources and themes rather than to collect first-hand accounts from my network.

The data collection was primarily concerned with, soft, qualitative evidence. Quantitative evidence was a relatively minor element in size, yet highly significant in uncovering unique material, and was based upon calculating the number of visiting golfers participating in the 1936-1939 Bournemouth Open Golf Tournaments from the records held by the Bournemouth Golf Alliance. These findings were complemented by an analysis of the UK census records to provide a more in-depth insight into the demographics of these golfing tourists who visited Bournemouth. There are nevertheless certain drawbacks associated with the use of census records for, as Higgs identifies, the census was at no time and could never be an impartial account. Issues of governmentality and limitations associated with the interpretation of facts together with inaccuracies or merely a lack of self-knowledge by the general public combine to

³⁵ Mike Huggins and Mike O'Mahony, 'Prologue: Extending Study of the Visual in the History of Sport', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no. 8-9, (2011):1089-1104.

³⁶ Arthur Marwick, *The New Nature of History: Knowledge, Evidence, Language* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 152.

potentially distort the truth.³⁷ This might skew the statistical findings within the thesis if the census figures recorded were not reliable. Reliability in this context is taken as consistency across time.³⁸ Now that the aims, motives and the guiding principles have been identified, the baseline context for the current examination of golf tourism on the South Coast will be further explored.

³⁷ Edward Higgs, *Making sense of the census revisited: census records for England and Wales 1801-1901: a handbook for historical researchers* (London: Institute of historical research, 2005).

³⁸ Leung, 'Validity, reliability, and generalizability', 324-327

Chapter 2

Perspectives on Tourism, Golf Tourism and Golfers

2. Perspectives on Tourism, Golf Tourism and Golfers

Tourism is a binary division between the ordinary/every day and the extraordinary. The experience is pleasurable and on a different scale when compared with everyday life.¹

2.1 Defining the Dimensions and Types of tourism

As a contextual basis for this thesis, one must first outline and examine the nature of tourism. However, attempts to define what is meant by tourism are problematical, as are similar attempts to date the earliest tourists. The origins of the word tour can be traced back to the Latin *tornare* and the Greek *tornos* meaning movement around a central point. Interestingly the word tourism does not appear in the English language until the early nineteenth century.² Gilbert concurs that it is hard to define, as tourism is incredibly broad in terms of its concepts and the variety of service inputs involved. In simple terms he says it is traditionally reduced to a series of activities that people, the tourists, partake in.³ Goeldner and Ritchie attempt to clarify matters by stating, ‘tourism is the sum of phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business suppliers, host governments, and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors’.⁴ Page notes that tourism is a discretionary activity, not one that people are required to do, but adds that how we use it defines our lives.⁵ This optional element is recognised by Urry in his landmark work, *The Tourist Gaze*, in which he states that it is about the pleasurable consumption of unnecessary goods and services while away from one’s normal place of work and residence, but with an intention to return home. He added that tourism is often supported by professionals who benefit from providing these unnecessary pleasures.⁶ Surely this is too narrow and does not allow for the more informal type of tourist who is merely seeking to travel from their home to a new place for a break or holiday. Likewise, if home is where you

¹ John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (London: Sage 2005), 12

² Patrick Laverty, *Travel and Tourism* (Suffolk: Elm Publications, 1989): Zauhar, ‘Historical perspectives of sports tourism’, 5–101

³ David Gilbert, ‘Conceptual issues in the meaning of tourism,’ in *Progress in Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality Management*, ed. Chris Cooper (London: Belhaven Press, 2009), 4-27

⁴ Charles Goeldner, and Brent W. Ritchie, *Tourism: Principles, Practice Philosophies*, 12th ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 4

⁵ Stephen Page, *Tourism Management* (London: Routledge 2019), 1

⁶ Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 1-3

belong, holidays are somewhere you go away to.⁷ Other questions to be answered include: Is there a minimum length of stay required and is the tourist required to undertake different, non-routine, activities including experiencing different events? How does a lack of activity, just resting and relaxing comply with the leisure and recreational forms of tourism?

The origins of the word holiday in old English, was *hāligdæg*, meaning holy day, and which refers to a day set aside for religious observance. This has been diluted and even lost over time, but resonates with Urry's idea that it was a time for one to take a break from routine and to be stimulated and refreshed. Robinson postulates that tourism is a complex topic and described it as part leisure, part hospitality and even part recreation. It does include elements of all three but is a separate and distinctive entity. In 1976 the Tourism Society⁸ described it as the temporary short term movement of people to places where they usually do not live or work, which chimes with Urry's definition.⁹ Cooper et al. argue it touches multiple activities and lives and that tourism includes many industries and includes economic, environmental and social issues.¹⁰ Their position has synergy with Goeldner and Ritchie's and will be reflected within the subsequent chapters of this study. A more detailed definition has been offered by Burkart and Medlick who identify five key characteristics of tourism:

- The movement of people to a destination and their stay there.
- There are two elements: the journey to and then their stay there.
- It takes place outside of the location where they normally live or work and the activities undertaken are different from normal ones.
- Defined in terms of the time: days, weeks or months spent away.

⁷ Fred Inglis, *The Delicious History of the Holiday* (London: Routledge, 2000), 8

⁸ The Tourism Society is a professional membership body for people working in all sectors of the visitor economy.

⁹ Peter Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2012), xxviii

¹⁰ Chris Cooper, John Fletcher, David Gilbert and Stephen Wannell, *Tourism Principles and Practice*, 2nd ed. (London: Pitman Publishing, 2000), 28

- There should be no intention to take up permanent residence or to seek employment.¹¹

This view is supported by De Knop, who states that tourism is a simple division between the ordinary everyday familiar life and the extraordinary in new or alternative settings including, for this study, sporting environments. Or to put it more simply, ‘sport away from home’.¹²

In 1995 the United Nations World Tourist Organisation (UNWTO) specified three forms of tourists:

- Domestic tourists travelling within their own country
- Inbound tourists arriving from another country
- Outbound tourists leaving to travel to another country for tourism purposes.¹³

My thesis primarily concentrates on domestic tourists travelling from across Britain, but most frequently from London and the Home Counties to the South Coast for their golf. This appeared to be the most dominant segment identified in my research. There is some evidence of outbound tourism with descriptions of the marketing of resorts and the options to travel from England to the north coast of France to play golf. Finally, there was some limited indication of inbound tourism with visitors coming from countries in the British Empire either as individuals returning home or as part of golf societies representing different touring groups. If this study had been extended post World War Two, a greater focus would have been on the latter two forms of tourism but, previously for the majority of the population, the barriers of time, money and habit prevented a greater involvement in international travel. Urry reasons that the tourism experience of spending one’s holiday by the seaside became significantly less appealing

¹¹ Arthur J. Burkart and S. Medlick, *Tourism: Past, Present and Future*, 2nd ed. (London: Heinemann, 1981), xxviii

¹² P. De Knop, ‘Sport for all and active tourism’ *World Leisure and Recreation* 32, no. 3 (1990): 30-36

¹³ Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, xxix

in the so-called Post-modern period that followed the hostilities as the custom of international travel accelerated.¹⁴

Academics including Robinson and Hujibens have championed Leiper’s 1979 Tourism System noting that it has been widely adopted as it allows tourism to be theorised.¹⁵ The framework or system is relatively simple and easy to comprehend, as it classifies that the participants are drawn from the Tourist Generating Region before travelling along the transit routes to the Tourist Destination Region (Figure 2.1).

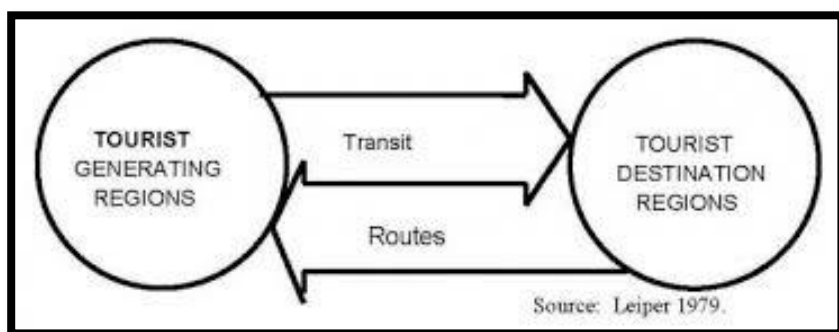


Figure 2.1: Leiper’s Tourism System

(The Framework of Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6, 2)

This translates to my study with the golfers living and working in London travelling by train to the courses located in the South Coast resorts. Leiper enhances his system by including several push-factors including marketing to encourage the tourist to use the transit routes to ultimately enjoy the pull-factors, the accommodation and the attractions, and for the purposes of this study, the golf courses. Robinson advocates that tourism is seen as the dynamic interaction between the two regions resulting in the flow of people.¹⁶ Cooper contextualises Leiper’s Tourism System placing his geographical elements between tourists and the tourism sector. He contends that the tourists are the actors and the tourism sector comprises of the range of businesses and organisations involved with the delivery.¹⁷ The tourists are influenced by Robinson’s push-factors

¹⁴ John Urry, ‘Cultural Change and Contemporary Holiday-making’ *Theory, Culture & Society* 5, no.1 (1988) 35-55

¹⁵ Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, xxvii and 254

¹⁶ Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, 255

¹⁷ Chris Cooper, *Essentials of Tourism*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Pearsons, 2016), 11

representing the demand-side, creating the need for the movement of people to visit and then stay in the destinations. This reflects the first three characteristics in Burkart and Medlick's definition above. Whereas, the tourism sector provides the pull-factors or what Cooper describes as the supply-side, comprising of the businesses and organisations that service the tourists.¹⁸ A further advantage of the model and a persuasive reason for using it within my thesis is that it applies to many sectors, including golf tourism.

Cooper has previously labelled the tourists as the actors in the system, but he also held that they are not a homogenous group, but comprise of different personalities and demographics. The duration of their tourism requirements also varied: day trips, weekend warriors, seven days, or occasionally for the season. Equally the purpose differed: from simple relaxation, leisure and recreation, cultural enlightenment, visiting friends, to study, or often for health and wellness.¹⁹ The purpose can be seen to reflect the motivators for undertaking tourism activities; these can be complex and usually a combination of different factors that support and reinforce each other. Olivova suggested there were four critical types of motivational factors for undertaking tourism: physical (related to rest but equally participation), cultural, interpersonal (human) and status.²⁰ With each motivator aiming to satisfy different, but sometimes similar or overlapping needs, there is a connection with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, particularly the links between status and esteem and, ultimately, self-actualisation.²¹

The tourism sector, as has been identified, is a complex web of often overlapping forms that are difficult to define precisely. This thesis seeks to explore leisure tourism, which Stockdale identifies as a time when the activity of choice is the dominant feature.²² Robinson highlights Youell's view that leisure tourism is determined by six factors: time, income, mobility, culture and demography, provision of facilities and long term

¹⁸ Cooper, *Essentials of Tourism*, 16-18.

¹⁹ Cooper, *Essentials of Tourism*, 22

²⁰ Vera Olivova, *Sports and Games in the Ancient World*, (London: Orbis, 1984), 107-8

²¹ Kate Gillespie and H. David Hennessey, *Global Marketing*, 4th ed. (London: Routledge, 2016), 139; Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper Row, 1954), 66

²² Janet Stockdale, *What is Leisure: An Empirical Analysis of the Concept of Leisure and the Role of Leisure in People's Lives* (London: The Sports Council, 1985), 61

social changes.²³ By extension, my study includes recreation tourism that McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie suggest represents the actions of people engaged in the use of their leisure time, active or passive, as an individual or in groups.²⁴ These are critical definitions, as active in terms of playing golf and passive in terms of spectating golf will be explored in the later chapters. Similarly, many of the tourists identified in this study will be individuals travelling alone, but the popular form of society golf, groups of men usually, from similar professions or occupations venturing to the South Coast course is also investigated in Chapter Four. Chapter Seven researches event tourism which Robinson argues is central to cultural tourism and enjoys significant levels of public support within this sector.²⁵ Goldblatt identified a four-level definition of event types: minor, special, hallmark and mega. The Open Golf Championship must be categorised as hallmark.²⁶

Robinson also identified community-based tourism as a form of a bottom-up approach to planning and development. This can easily be seen in the approach undertaken by the municipal corporations in the development of municipal golf courses in Chapter Six with the stated objective of attracting new tourists into the resorts.²⁷ Closely related are elements of destination management tourism that comprises all the supply-side stakeholders in the tourism experience coming together to improve competitiveness.²⁸ This is initially explained in Chapter Three and is further investigated in Chapter Six, where the motivations for the corporations to increase their tourism offer are explored. Finally, despite the evidence of a growing demand for golf tourism through the period of my study, the area could still be described as niche tourism. Stone in Robinson defined this as when a relatively small market segment, undoubtedly true for golf

²³ Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, 115; Ray Youell, *Leisure and Tourism*, (London: Longman, 1995), 5

²⁴ Robert W. McIntosh, Charles R. Goeldner and Brent W. Ritchie, *Tourism: Principles, Practices and Philosophies* 2nd ed. (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons 1990)

²⁵ Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, 75

²⁶ Joe Goldblatt, *Special Events: Global Event Management in the 21st. Century* (London: John Wiley and Sons, 2002), 76

²⁷ Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, 29

²⁸ Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, 53

tourism in the late nineteenth century, which has a specialist interest and product (golf) driven approach.²⁹

In contrast, there are no traces of mass tourism. Robinson regards mass tourism as relating to the scale of tourism and participation levels, catering to tourists in vast numbers and as a profit maximising economic activity.³⁰ There was a close relationship between economics and golf tourism in my research, but certainly not on an enormous scale. Furthermore, the thesis is not reflective of family tourism. Nevertheless, there is some nodding reference to occasions when families accompanied the husband/father to the resorts but were then encouraged to pursue their own activities while he played his golf. Equally, business tourism is not the primary focus of this work. However, it is acknowledged that the presence of golf societies comprising of professionals from similar companies would have represented an opportunity for some business-related interactions to take place.

2.2 History of Tourism

Sections of society have been motivated to become tourists since the days of the leisured elite in ancient Greece and Rome. Sports tourism can conceivably be credited with the genesis of all tourism through the actions of the touring professionals competing in the ancient Olympic Games, along with the spectators who travelled to support the athletes who were representing the prestige and honour of their cities.³¹ Revealingly, Homer, in his epic Greek poem *Odyssey* refers to large crowds of spectators following the running, throwing and wrestling events. This wish to observe, as a privileged onlooker, rather than participate is described by Zauhar as, ‘Spectatorism.’ This has been a significant area of sports tourism in combination with the participant throughout the centuries. Indeed, the spectator can be further separated into different categories: social, business, betting, mild, passionate or even therapeutic,

²⁹ Philip Stone, ‘Niche Marketing’, in *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, ed. Peter Robinson (London: Routledge, 2012), 149

³⁰ Robinson, *Tourism: The Key Concepts*, 125

³¹ Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, 3; Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 4; Maxine Feifer, *Going Places* (London: Macmillan, 1985)

as each person will hold different reasons for their attendance.³² Conditions for these pioneering sports tourists were harsh and primitive, according to Crowther, who investigated the reasons for their presence and attempted to establish more detail about who attended and how far they travelled.³³

Several decades later, religion became a central pillar for tourism with the growth of pilgrimages. If tourism is motivated by faith and spirituality, then pilgrimage is one of the oldest and most basic forms of mass population mobility known to human society. Its desire for emotional experience and its political, social, and cultural implications has always been substantial.³⁴ For centuries, Jews and Christians have travelled to Jerusalem, and Muslims have journeyed to Mecca. Another form of tourism that was undertaken during this period was the organisation of archery competitions and jousting tournaments for touring knights to compete in chivalric and certainly military-related sports.³⁵ Barker suggests that the tournament should be considered as a sport and emphasises the role of the spectator as an integral part of the pageantry, banqueting and other festivities associated with these events.³⁶ Steen, in his history of spectator sport, refers to how, at the beginning of the cultural rebirth of the Renaissance in the fourteenth century, the playing of Real Tennis,³⁷ was a fashionable activity for European aristocrats across courts located in France, Italy and England. This identifies a progression from military-based sports through to more elegant and less aggressive activities for the nobility, in keeping with the period.³⁸ This was a prelude to the development of broader cultural activities undertaken on the celebrated grand tour, which became popular for young men from the wealthiest elements of British society to complete their education, travelling around Europe in the eighteenth century. The grand tour was developed from the classical tour, studying high culture in galleries and

³² Zauhar, 'Historical perspectives of sports tourism', 5–101

³³ Nigel Crowther, 'Visiting the Olympic Games in Ancient Greece: Travel and Conditions for Athletes and Spectators', *International Journal of the History of Sport* 18, no. 4 (2001), 37-52.

³⁴ Ruth Blackwell, 'Motivations for religious tourism, pilgrimage, festivals and events.' in *Religious tourism and pilgrimage festivals management: an international perspective*, ed. R. Raj and N.D. Morpeth (Wallingford: CABI, 2007), 35-47

³⁵ Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, 4-5

³⁶ Juliet R.V. Barker, *The Tournament in England 1100-1400* (Wolfeboro NH: Boydell, 1986), 84

³⁷ Known in France as *courte-paume*.

³⁸ Rob Steen, *Floodlights and Touchlines: A History of Spectator Sport* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 81

museums, to the so-called romantic tour of the late seventeenth century which might have encompassed some more physical pursuits such as riding and fencing. By the mid-eighteenth century, Towner estimates that between 15,000-20,000 Britons were annually undertaking this rite of passage that effectively became a model for future sports tourism, with specific itineraries and the eventual development of limited tourist infrastructure.³⁹

While the grand tour appears to be a particular British affair, the nineteenth century saw an acceleration in the development of another tourist activity, namely the attraction of Spa towns throughout Europe that attracted British and European visitors alike. These destinations included a full programme of organised pleasurable social events for the participants, including the holding of balls and promenades for the busy socialising elite. This unnecessary consumption clearly complies with the definitions of tourism and holidaying set out by Urry, Weed and Bull. A contemporary development was the commencement of the commercialised and organised element of tourism for a broader segmentation of the population. It is generally recognised to have been pioneered in 1841 by Thomas Cook, who took a train excursion from Leicester to a temperance meeting in Loughborough at the cost of a shilling per head. After building up his business and experience with visits to destinations all around the UK, Cook undertook his first continental tour in 1855.⁴⁰ Thus by the middle of the nineteenth century, professionally organised tours by innovators and entrepreneurs managing commercially-oriented companies, providing holidays to places of interest had become established.⁴¹ A critical development that Cook was able to utilise from his very first venture was the improvement in transport. These developments enhanced the travellers' experience in terms of comfort, safety and speed.⁴²

³⁹ John Towner, 'The Grand Tour; a key phase in the history of tourism', *Annals of Tourism Research* 12, no.3 (1985), 297-333; Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, 4-5

⁴⁰ Ken Roberts, *The Business of Leisure* (London, Palgrave, 2016), 101

⁴¹ John Towner, 'What is tourism's history?', *Tourism Management* 16, no. 5 (1995): 339-343.

⁴² Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, 4-5

2.3 Evidence of Sports Tourism

With an increase in tourism in the nineteenth century, it was natural that sport quickly became the focus for a particular strand of tourism either as a participant or as a spectator. Some of the first sports to encourage sporting tourism were horse racing and rowing.⁴³ *The Sporting Life* in 1859 noted how the Epsom Derby attracted spectators from across continental Europe and even more distant places, such as North America and the Indian sub-continent.⁴⁴ A decade later, London witnessed an estimated crowd of over one million lining the banks of the River Thames to see the boat race between crews from Oxford and Harvard Universities compete over the four miles from Putney to Mortlake.⁴⁵ Matthews confirms that the Harvard crew were supported by friends travelling from North America and the crowd would have included countless home supporters. They had travelled down from Oxford to swell the number of fascinated Londoners to witness the race. This period also saw the educated classes forming clubs and travelling abroad to pursue adventurous activities like mountaineering and skiing in the Alps, such as the famous Alpine Club formed in 1857 by a group of Oxbridge graduates.⁴⁶ Huggins deems it worth noting that in 1905 about a third of the male members of Ski Club of Great Britain were clergymen and just under half were serving military officers.⁴⁷

Moreover, it was now possible for a much broader spectrum of society to engage in sports tourism outside of the narrow band of elite participants, who had previously been able to afford the time and money to pursue such activities. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, football became established as a mass participation sport for both players and for the crowds of supporters who wanted to follow their team to away fixtures, with the introduction of the FA Cup in 1871 and the Football League in 1888. This trend towards supporting one's team became possible as disposable income began

⁴³ Holt, *Sport and the British*; Huggins, 'Sport, tourism and history', 107-130.

⁴⁴ *Sporting Life*, 28 May 1859.

⁴⁵ Joseph J. Mathews, 'The First Harvard-Oxford Boat Race', *The New England Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (1960), 74-82.

⁴⁶ Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, 8; Eric Levet-Labry and Schut Pierre-Olaf, 'Sport and Tourism - An Effective Cooperation: Canoeing and Mountaineering in France before the First World War.' *Sport in History* 34, no. 2 (2014): 276-294.

⁴⁷ Huggins, 'Sport, tourism and history', 107-130.

to spread to the middle and professional classes. Such participation became viable for this demographic as Myerscough identifies that wages for many workers increased by 91% between 1860 and 1913.⁴⁸ Hill has investigated this theme analysing the behaviour and the local identity of fans visiting London from the north of England for FA and Rugby League Cup Finals. Further studies have advanced the discussion to take on board not just social factors but also economics and popular culture, albeit from an American sport and a more contemporary viewpoint, but spectatorship generally remains an understudied topic.⁴⁹

An increase in cycling and walking holidays became popular for the public as they looked to venture from the new urban towns and cities to rural locations for their leisure activities. The Cycling Touring Club (CTC) was formed in 1878 (originally known as the Bicycle Touring Club) which capitalised on the opportunities that the cycle provided for independent travel. From their foundation, the CTC aided the development of sports tourism by setting out to identify suitable hostelrys for its members and include them in members' guides and handbooks. In 1880 the first lady member, Mrs W. D. Welford, was admitted to the CTC which demonstrates the openness of cycling and an early breaking down of the gender barriers through sport and sports tourism.⁵⁰ Another opportunity that did emerge for people who wanted to partake in walking holidays was the formation in 1891 of the Co-operative Holiday Association (CHA) by the non-conformist minister T.A. Leonard from Colne, Lancashire. The CHA promoted that they provided, 'a holiday of another kind,' combining physical activity with a variety of sociable evening entertainment, designed as an alternative to Wakes Weeks⁵¹ where the working classes descended on the likes of Blackpool and Morecambe for a range of more base activities. Analysis of the CHA's membership from the turn of the nineteenth

⁴⁸ John Myerscough, 'The recent history of the use of leisure time,' in *Leisure Research and Policy*, ed. I. Appleton (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1974)

⁴⁹ Hill, 'Rites of Spring: Cup Finals and Community in the North of England,' 85-111; Kevin Quinn, *Sports and Their Fans: The History, Economics and Culture of the Relationship between the Spectator and Sport* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009), 105

⁵⁰ Robert Woodhouse, *Harrogate in 100 Dates* (Stroud: The History Press, 2014)

⁵¹ Wakes Weeks were when factory and mill owners recognised the benefits in permitting dedicated weeks, when the whole establishment was closed down rather than disruptive irregular holidays being taken but this created mass movement of workers to seaside holiday destinations.

century reveals that women out-numbered men and that the association drew heavily from the middle classes. A respectable reputation with a feminine identity thus emerged within the countryside leisure activities offered by the CHA.⁵²

Within this emerging sports tourism background, golf as a booming sport amongst the elite and the upper-middle classes soon became a significant element of this ever-growing movement of people. Ritchie and Adair remind us that there are two different basic types of sports tourism: active (skiing, cycling, golf) and passive (sports events and sports museums) as identified by McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie previously in this chapter.⁵³ Kurtzman has further sub-divided sport tourism into six categories: sport tourism attractions, sport tourism resorts, sport tourism cruises, sport tourism tours, sport tourism events and sport adventure tourism.⁵⁴ The nature of active sports tourism constitutes people who travel to participate in sport, either competitively or for recreational or leisure purposes.⁵⁵ Chapters Five and Seven will expand these areas and examine the different reasons why golfers travelled to play on the region's private and public golf courses.

As golf became increasingly popular, golfers looked to visit to play and to spectate the game on the famous courses. As Gibson argues, this links the two forms of golf tourism.⁵⁶ Butler has noted how the importance and the heritage of The Open Championship attract considerable attention and enhances the desire of golfers to journey to The Open venues to watch the stars.⁵⁷ This includes the three Kent courses that have hosted The Open, and this pilgrimage will be discussed in Chapter Eight. Golf plays a vital role in sports tourism. It is a significant sector that impacts on resorts in attracting new and

⁵² Roberts, *The Business of Leisure*, 101-102; Ben Anderson, 'Partnerships or Co-operation? Family, Politics and Strenuousness in the pre-First World War Co-operative Holidays Association', *Sport in History* 33, no.3 (2013), 260-281

⁵³ Brent W. Ritchie and Daryl Adair, *Sport Tourism: Interrelationships, Impacts and Issues* (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2004), 8

⁵⁴ Joseph Kurtzman, 'Sport and tourism relationship: A unique reality,' In *Sports Generated Tourism: Exploring the Nexus*, ed. B. Ritchie and D Adair (proceeding of the First Australian Sports Tourism Symposium, Canberra: Tourism Programme, University of Canberra, 2000), 5-22

⁵⁵ Brenda Pitts, 'Sports tourism and niche markets: Identification and analysis of the emerging lesbian and gay sports tourism industry' *Journal of Vocation Marketing* 5, no. 1 (1999), 31

⁵⁶ Gibson, 'Sport Tourism', 45-76.

⁵⁷ Youcheng Wang and Abraham Pizam, *Destination marketing and management: theories and applications* (Wallingford: Cabi, 2011), 156

additional tourists, extending the season and improving facilities for visitors and locals alike. It creates jobs and brings further investment into the towns through the generation of secondary spend.⁵⁸ Masterman has recognised the worth of the sports tourist as being a key stakeholder in determining the success of an event or destination, as they invest in the local economy by way of their journey to and subsequent stay in the resort.⁵⁹

With the game of golf itself, the first opportunities for golf tourism appeared in Scotland. Indeed, sport in general became a significant factor drawing tourists to Scotland in this period. Its spas were poor and its seaside resorts were only for the bravest souls, yet golf along with grouse shooting became synonymous with the reputation of Scotland on a par with the culture and literature of Burns and Scott. For Victorians, Scotland was, ‘the home of golf’.⁶⁰ MacKenzie, in his descriptions of the nineteenth-century Scottish environment, noted that, ‘the English were converting the north into a vast sporting playground.’ This is supported in the 1857 *Edinburgh Review*, which recognised the amount of income that tourism generated and stated that, ‘an enormous amount of London money is being spent in the Highlands’.⁶¹ This London money was not only being spent on the sport directly but also on what we would now call the supporting industries, which included hoteliers, catering, transport and equipment suppliers.

Kirk observed that even for illustrious venues like St. Andrews, ‘golf lured life back into the sombre streets of St Andrews’. Golf tourism thus not only provided opportunities and income for the hoteliers but also direct employment for the locals in club making, caddying and green keeping and then, indirectly, for local builders constructing new hotels and also houses in the town.⁶² The hiring of caddies and greenkeepers meant that the golfing dividend spread to more than just the elite and

⁵⁸ Catherine Palmer, ‘More Than Just a Game; The Consequence of Golf Tourism,’ in *Sport Tourism: Interrelationships, Impacts and Issues*, ed. Brent W. Ritchie and Daryl Adair (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2004), 117

⁵⁹ Guy Masterman, *Strategic Sport Event Management: An International Approach* (London: Elsevier, 2004), 90

⁶⁰ Durie, ‘Sporting tourism flowers’, 131-145.

⁶¹ John Mackenzie, *The Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires. Imperialism, Scotland and the Environment* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1997), 69; *Edinburgh Review*, 1857.

⁶² R. Kirk, *St. Andrews* (London, 1954), 171

middle classes. The caddies were frequently from the working classes, but in 1875 a first-class caddie could earn 1s. 6d. per round.⁶³ Golf also prospered in Ireland; as a game of Scottish origin it did not attract the negative political undertones of being an alien or English game, and so was supported by the Irish Tourist Board. Ireland, even in Edwardian times, had a reputation as a dangerous destination for the elite English visitor. The country then collapsed almost entirely as a destination for this section of the English population after the Irish War of Independence (1919-1921). Throughout this period of tension in Ireland, golf continued to be popular and lucrative for the Scottish economy with most of the resort courses hosting a range of competitions during the summer months, offering prizes for locals and visitors and income for the host clubs through the collection of summer green fees. So high was the demand that in the years both before and just following World War One, some of the Scottish railway companies even considered it economically viable to construct several luxury hotels to service this golfing demand. The now-famous hotels of Cruden Bay, Dornoch, Turnberry and Gleneagles were built between 1899 and 1924.⁶⁴ This thesis will investigate if this model was repeated on England's South Coast to service its courses and resorts.

2.4 Who played golf in English society?

Golf had been played in Scotland for centuries; the first reference to the game dates back to 1457 when the Scottish Parliament declared that golf was interfering with the defence of the realm and specifically the practice of archery, declaring golf to be, 'utterly cryit doun and nocht usit'.⁶⁵ Golf made little impact in England until the 1860s; before then it was considered to be an idiosyncratic and mysterious Scottish pastime. Yet golf was promoted so successfully, that by the end of the nineteenth century it had become regarded as a fashionable sport for English upper and upper-middle-class

⁶³ Richard MacKenzie, *A Wee Nip at the 19th Hole; A History of the St. Andrews Caddie* (St Andrews, 1997), 20-21

⁶⁴ Rex Pope, 'Railway companies and resort hotels between the wars.' *The Journal of Transport History* 22, no. 1 (2001): 62-73.

⁶⁵ Fernando Completo and Nuno Gustavo, 'Golf Tourism Destination Management: Looking for a Sustainable Demand: The Case of Portugal', *Journal of Management and Sustainability* 4, no. 1 (2014): 142-153.

gentlemen who formed or joined private and exclusive clubs.⁶⁶ This is a narrative that Cameron develops: how the game underwent a repackaging process to make it socially acceptable, and how the English as the dominant economic force would proceed to set the tone of what was good and best in British culture.⁶⁷ Within an historical study of any English population, the subject of class must be addressed. Cannadine described three different views on the English class system, a seamless and interconnected web, three distinct levels or merely a case of them and us.⁶⁸ However, it is difficult to categorise what was meant by class; different people from academics to politicians to writers have constantly changed the meaning and from the outset there was never one clear definition or model. Some of the difficulties when trying to identify the meaning of middle-class make it far too simplistic to just categorise by someone's occupation. This group within society have sometimes, if rather optimistically, been referred to as the new elite. They were undoubtedly the new comfortable if not the new rich and they typically populated the newly created suburbs that surrounded most of the major Victorian cities.⁶⁹

Providing substantial opportunities for golf clubs to attract new members, this large number of affluent middle-class residents demanded new forms of active recreational opportunities. A second demographic segment for golf clubs to draw membership from, but still representing a significant number, were the lower middle class who were made up of professionals employed as clerks and teachers, estimated as accounting for just over 500,000 in 1911.⁷⁰

The rapid increase in the popularity of golf tends to disguise the complex picture of diverse middle-class sporting interests. Yet, arguably, golf had more of a lasting legacy than any other contemporary sport including rowing, tennis, athletics or even rugby union, despite all having strong individual claims to this designation.⁷¹ Golf was a game that was less physically demanding for the middle-aged man, whereas for the younger

⁶⁶ Lowerson, *Sport and the English middle classes*, 125-127

⁶⁷ Donald Cameron, *Social Links – The Golf Boom in Victorian England* (Social Links Publishing, 2009), 14

⁶⁸ David Cannadine, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

⁶⁹ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 6-8.

⁷⁰ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 9-11

⁷¹ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 125

elements of the middle classes it was frowned upon, and only pursued as a holiday sport. As golf was not played in schools, it was seen as a distraction to the manlier collective team-sport games.⁷² These new middle classes, stuck between the established gentry and aristocracy and the professional working class yeoman, were often uncertain about their place in the emerging society. Hence, in attempts to delineate their position, they commonly used sport and the joining of sports clubs to position themselves and to erect some boundaries of class.⁷³ Moreover, as McKibbin states, golf was a game that was steeped in relentless amateurism, which provided an ideological underpinning.

As golf became established, this social-political view was reflected in a demand for dedicated golfing literature and even saw some of the non-sports specialist magazines begin to increase their number of features on golf. A volume on the game was published in 1890 as part of the *Badminton Library of Sports and Pastimes*, published by Longmans, Green and Co. This series of publications was created by Henry Somerset, 8th Duke of Beaufort and ran from 1885-1902. They covered every major sport over thirty-three different volumes. The golfing volume was edited by Horace Hutchinson who, as the double Amateur Golf Champion, could bring his in-depth knowledge of the game to the editorial process serving to legitimise and promote the game.⁷⁴ Equally notable titles such as *The Field* also took advantage of this level of interest. Beginning in 1853 it was the country's first country and field sports magazine. It featured a monthly combination of sporting, farming and society news in an era when an increasing number of the population had the means and the time to follow these pursuits and to partake in reading gentlemen's literature.⁷⁵ In competition to *The Field*, the renowned publication of the aristocracy, *Country Life*, was launched in 1897 and regularly featured golf amongst its articles, reflecting the outdoor sporting preferences of its public-school principled subscribers. Indeed, in addition to writing in *The Times*, Bernard Darwin⁷⁶ regularly covered golf for *Country Life* from 1907 to 1961.⁷⁷ *Punch*

⁷² Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 129

⁷³ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 7-8

⁷⁴ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 251

⁷⁵ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 251

⁷⁶ Darwin was a celebrated journalist who covered golf for *The Times* from 1907 to 1953, the first writer ever to cover golf on a daily basis. He was elected to the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2005.

also frequently depicted golf and golfers, albeit in comical and less than flattering situations, as exemplified in a 1900 cartoon that suggests the wearing of knicker-like plus-fours and the playing of golf with a little ball as infantile and not what is associated with acceptable manly behaviour (Figure 2.2).⁷⁸



Figure 2.2: On the Golf Links

(*Punch*, 7 February 1900)

Although these depictions were sometimes at odds with some of the game's haughty values, it also provided a counter-balance to golf's stereotype by depicting it in a more human and less elitist manner.⁷⁹ It can be argued, therefore, that the coverage of golf in the media heightened awareness and subsequently demand to participate in the game amongst the middle-class readership.

⁷⁷ Huggins, 'Sport and the British Upper', 364-388.

⁷⁸ *Punch*, 7 February 1900

⁷⁹ Huggins, 'Sport and the British Upper Classes', 364-388.

By contrast, given the expense of equipment and membership fees, golf was generally beyond the means of the masses. One of the key studies on the subject of the cost of sport was produced by Aflalo in 1899 when he identified some typical expenditures associated with middle-class sporting participation. This included an estimated annual cost of £20-£30 to play golf, whereas tennis was projected to be a more modest £10 per year.⁸⁰ When comparing historical costs to current prices, (Table 2.1) uses 1899, the year of Aflalo’s survey, as a baseline, 1919 as the mid-point and then 1939 the year my study concludes, as the final comparison point.⁸¹ The differences make some interesting observations, notwithstanding the fluctuation in inflation rates, when applied to the costs identified within my study of just how important golf became to those who could afford it across these forty years.

Table 2.1: Cost Comparison Table

Historic Costs in 1899 -with decimal equivalents	Inflation-adjusted value in 2019	Historic Costs in 1919 -with decimal equivalents	Inflation-adjusted value in 2019	Historic Costs in 1939 -with decimal equivalents	Inflation-adjusted value in 2019
6d. (2 ½ p)	£3.24	6d. (2 ½ p)	£1.30	6d. (2 ½ p)	£1.65
1s. (5p)	£6.47	1s. (5p)	£2.60	1s. (5p)	£3.29
10s.(50p)	£64.73	10s.(50p)	£26.01	10s.(50p)	£32.93
£1	£129.47	£1	£52.02	£1	£65.86
(Guinea) £1 1s.(£1.05)	£132.71	(Guinea) £1 1s.(£1.05)	£54.62	(Guinea) £1 1s.(£1.05)	£69.15
£10	£1,294.66	£10	£520.23	£10	£658.55
£100	£12,946.59	£100	£5,202.28	£100	£6,585.55
£1,000	£129,465.91	£1,000	£52,022.83	£1,000	£65,855.49
£10,000	£1,294,659.09	£10,000	£520,228.31	£10,000	£658,554.91

However, from the late 1880s, a lower-middle-class fringe became attracted to the game, and artisan golf clubs emerged. There were often socio-economic agreements where artisans could play at a reduced fee, but at restricted times, and only if they also

⁸⁰ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle classes*, 14

⁸¹ Inflation Calculator, Bank of England, <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator> (accessed 2 November 2020)

undertook maintenance tasks on the course and in the clubhouse.⁸² The first recorded artisan club was formed in Westward Ho! in 1888; then nearly a decade later in 1897 the Royal Ashdown Forest GC, in Sussex, formed an artisan offshoot, known as the Cantelupe Artisans. However, in England, there were fewer than fourteen of these in operation by the start of World War One.⁸³ For those artisan golfers who did join, there was little mixing with the full members on the fairways. Indeed, at Royal North Devon, the artisans used a separate gate to the first tee so that they did not cross in front of the clubhouse, thereby aping cricket's amateur and professional player segregation.⁸⁴

Who played or indeed watched sport was therefore shaped by a composite of factors of which class and income were vital components, as was gender, with women's participation often being restricted. Women's role and position in all sports were and still are highly contested. Sports historians have considered the topic of gender in sport and, through recording the growth of women's golf, they have highlighted that golf was not only a respectable sport but also one with a degree of radicalism. Golf allowed more women's participation than did most other sports, although on the understanding that a degree of segregation was required.⁸⁵ St Andrews was the leader in enabling women's golf with the St Andrews LGC formed in 1867, but initially limited to just putting on the Himalayas. The Himalayas is the apt description given to St Andrews Ladies' Putting Club course with its incredible undulations that define the putting course. The restrictions in women's clothing was one practical reason for this barrier, preventing them from easily engaging in any golfing strokes, other than putting.

Some of the first women's golf clubs in England were formed along the West Coast at Westward Ho! in 1868 and soon after at Paignton, both in Devon. In 1868 sixty-eight women were present for the first ladies tournament at North Devon. By the early 1890s

⁸² Paul Wheeler, 'An ambitious club on a small scale: The rise of the Royal Isle of Wight Golf Club 1882-1914', *Sport in History* 36, no.4 (2016): 477-497

⁸³ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle classes*, 143; Wray Vamplew, 'Sharing Space: Inclusion, Exclusion, and Accommodation at the British Golf Club Before 1914', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 34, no.3 (2010): 359-375

⁸⁴ Vamplew, 'Sharing Space', 359-375

⁸⁵ Jane George, "Ladies First?": Establishing a Place for Women Golfers in British Golf Clubs 1867-1914', *Sport in History* 30, no. 2 (2010): 288-308. ; Durie, 'Sporting tourism flowers', 131-145.

around 2,000 women were playing golf in Britain, although at most clubs the women experienced a high degree of inequality of access to play on the course and within the clubhouse.⁸⁶ Women were seen as a distraction, an invader to the male domain, where the men had retreated to get away from female interference. Women were thus kept on the fringes and experienced blatant examples of sexism where their domestic heritage and lifestyle could not be escaped, as they were often expected to raise funds through activities like hosting ladies afternoon teas. At some clubs women did secure their own 9-hole courses, or hen runs, but under the reluctant tolerance of the men's club, and with their committees usually controlled by male officers. If they were allowed to venture onto the main course, opportunities were limited in terms of membership numbers, specific times of play and rarely on Sundays.⁸⁷

Anxieties about gender decreed that women were expected to play a respectable and ladylike version of the game. They were required to wear appropriate clothing, long and heavy skirts, tight corsets and high heeled boots, all calculated to retain their femininity while playing sport. Specialist equipment was therefore required, and this included the wearing of an elastic strap. This was known as a Miss Higgins, after its inventor. It was worn around the waist until needed, to keep the billowing shirts in place as the shot was taken.⁸⁸ Much of the available resort sport was focused on the demands of the male sportsman, but early chances for female participation through the intermingling of the sexes did arise in matches of mixed tennis or fourballs in golf. Victorians and Edwardians, north and south of the border, recognised that golf was good for one's physical health and was also a very sociable sport. Golf, in particular, benefitted from the handicap system where husbands and wives, fathers and daughters could play together on an even playing field. Tournaments boosted visitor numbers for both genders.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Derek Birley, *Sport and the making of Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 318

⁸⁷ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle classes*, 215-216

⁸⁸ Early Women's Golf in the USA, *Through the Green*, December 2016, 25

⁸⁹ Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 80-82, 110; Alastair J. Durie and Mike Huggins, 'Sport, social tone and the seaside resorts of Great Britain, c.1850-1914', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 15, no.1 (1998): 173-187.

It is against this theoretical and historical backdrop that the research has been synthesised to create new knowledge and a deeper insight into this field of study. These findings commence with an analysis of those organisations that provided the momentum for golf tourism to develop.

Chapter 3

South Coast Golf Tourism: The Contribution of Transport and Hotels

3. South Coast Golf Tourism: The Contribution of Transport and Hotels

The heyday of Britain's railways coincided with an extraordinary growth in the popularity of golf; indeed up to the 1920s golf was conceived as good for the railways business.¹

Golf has not only built hotels or enabled them to be built, but it has built boarding houses and clubhouses and made them into paying concerns.²

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Three considers the enablers that empowered golfing holidays to occur. It will initially outline from the 1880s, how the primary destinations for golfing holidays in the South, the seaside resorts of Bournemouth, the East Sussex trio of Brighton, Eastbourne and Bexhill, the Isle of Wight and East Kent, became established. It will also outline how these resorts developed and created different characteristics. Key aspects that are discussed include factors that allowed the public to enjoy their time off, such as the increased number of days holiday given and the introduction of statutory paid holidays. A major area of interest within this field will show who were the drivers, influencers and motivators behind the development of the golf tourism industry as a new and discrete form of a holiday. The critical contributions made by the supporting services, the enablers, are at the heart of this chapter; in particular how the region's infrastructure and transport systems catered for and encouraged the development of golf, and ultimately the increase in participation in the game. Specifically, it will consider how by the 1870s, the railways added to this boom through their extensive networks providing easier, more comfortable and cheaper access to the seaside courses, particularly those that would have been difficult to reach. The importance and impact of other forms of transport, including ferries to the Isle of Wight, the Channel Isles and even the near Continent, will be shown as being intrinsically economically and socially entwined with the golf tourism provided on the mainland of the South Coast of England. In terms of transportation, this research also will demonstrate how roads had a pivotal role, particularly during the 1930s at the end of the inter-war period, when the growing impact of the motor-car as a means of transport for the middle and upper classes made

¹ Ian Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection* (Dalkeith: Scottish Cultural Press, 2003), 15

² *Blackpool Herald* 1900

travel possibilities more flexible. Finally, the increasing importance of hotels to the expansion of golf tourism, through their pro-active encouragement will be discussed. The encouragement came despite this niche sports orientated market segment being in direct competition with hotels' other, more traditional kind of visitors, for bed-spaces in the resorts. By using primary source material originating in historical golfing periodicals and newspapers, together with analysis in contemporary books, the research will explain how towns, railways and hotels worked together to facilitate the golfing holiday. Of particular interest are the hotels built by railway companies in Hythe (1867), Southampton (1880) and Deal (1898). Furthermore, it will demonstrate how on the milder South Coast, these partnerships enjoyed a mutual benefit through the extension of the holiday season and the promotion of spring and autumn shoulder seasons and even winter golf.

3.2 The Rise in Popularity of Holidaying at the Seaside

The growth of the seaside holiday resort and the suitability of land along the coastal strips, for the increasingly popular game of golf between 1890 and 1914, brought these two trends together. The elite sections of society, including royalty, had visited the seaside resorts for over a century before the golfing boom. For many the attraction was medicinal rather than for pleasure or relaxation. Bathing in the sea and even the consumption of seawater was considered by doctors to be good for one's health and a remedy to a range of diseases. It had also become fashionable for the population to visit the seaside to wash away the stains and impurities of the year.³ These links between health, health-related activities and visiting the seaside, unsurprisingly developed into the playing of sports as the century progressed and recreation became popular with all elements of society.

This desire for recreation and wider forms of entertainment was a catalyst for developing the miles of the British Coastline, from small fishing villages to urbanised and dedicated seaside resorts. Equally important was the impact of the industrial

³ Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 17; Walton, *The English Seaside Resort*, 13-14; James Walvin, *Leisure and Society* (London: Longman, 1978), 13-14

revolution and the change in population habitus. At the beginning of the nineteenth century only 20% of the population lived in towns; a century later this had increased to 80%, but very few towns had sufficient amenities to meet the increased demand for recreation. From the middle of the nineteenth century, the British economy was increasingly buoyant, and this motivated private landowners and municipal bodies to seize on this demand for recreation and follow a range of developmental policies. At seaside resorts where private estate owners controlled a large degree of the land, such as Eastbourne, a higher standard of amenities was provided. Whereas, at towns where the municipal authority or several individuals owned the land, the development of amenities and infrastructure was more working-class in its style. The entrepreneurial capitalism of operators also helped shape the tone and landscape of the resort developments, as small guest houses, beach entertainments and fairgrounds were built in competition with the large hotels and municipal parks and piers.⁴ In summary, the urbanisation of the seaside resorts was influenced by a range of factors, some under the control of the local landowners, others swayed by commercially led interests as well as wider trends emerging in popular leisure.

However, what made visits to the seaside physically possible from the middle of the century was the expansion of the railway network, which made mass travel from the new towns to the beach significantly faster, more comfortable and more affordable, even for the industrial working classes. Previously transport by coach was uncomfortable, on account of the poor roads, and also expensive at 3d a mile. However, the 1844 Railway Act required companies to introduce services for the poorer sections of society and also ensured that their carriages should be protected from the weather and have seats included.⁵

For the professional and working classes, several social changes around employment conditions and successful attempts to increase leisure time, for example half-day

⁴ John Hassan, *The Seaside, Health and the Environment in England and Wales since 1800* (London: Routledge, 2016), 37

⁵ Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 16; Walton, *The English Seaside Resort*, 22

holidays on Saturdays, provided the opportunity to travel.⁶ Over the same period, the professional middle-class employee could expect up to two weeks of annual holidays. This significantly reversed a trend where industrialisation had reduced the number of observed public holidays for saints' days and religious festivals from over forty-four in 1808 to just four, plus local holidays, fairs and festivals in 1834. This reduction had been a consequence of employers seeking to maximise productivity and who considered leisure as unnecessary and costly.⁷ These bank holidays were formalised in the Bank Holidays Act 1871, which designated four holidays in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and five in Scotland. These were Easter Monday, the first Monday in August, the 26th December, and Whit Monday (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and New Year's Day (Scotland). Additionally, Christmas Day and Good Friday were traditional days of rest and Christian worship and did not need to be included in the Act. Sir John Lubbock, the 1st Lord and Baron Avebury, an English banker, politician, naturalist and archaeologist, introduced this act. It aimed to give the professional classes and the lower middle-classes additional breaks from work, to create parity with the working classes who had already secured half days on Saturdays.⁸ With this additional leisure time available for large swathes of the working population, Urry states that by 1911, 55% of the population in England and Wales took at least one trip per annum to the seaside.⁹

Social and economic developments continued as the twentieth century progressed, contributing to a widening of opportunities and an increase in democratisation. The move to holidays with pay in the 1920s, regularised in 1938 with the Holidays with Pay Act (the right to one week of paid holiday per year), meant that most people could now take a modest holiday, such as a week at the seaside.¹⁰ Significantly this meant that a holiday excursion was no longer just the preserve of the wealthy classes but became accessible for the majority of society. To support this exodus to the seaside, vast population growth within the resorts occurred faster than in the manufacturing towns themselves, as hotels and other components of the service industry were created which

⁶ Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 150-1

⁷ Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, 6-7

⁸ Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, 64

⁹ Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 18

¹⁰ Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, 10

required staff to cater for the hordes of visitors heading to the newly emerging towns. The population of Brighton evidences this: it grew from 7,000 to over 65,000 in just fifty years from the start of the nineteenth century.¹¹ Brighton's fame as a health spa had been enhanced by the frequent patronage of the Prince of Wales (later George IV), who visited the town from 1783 to 1827 and who also oversaw the building of the Brighton Pavilion as his summer residence. As visitor numbers to Brighton grew from the second decade of the nineteenth century, the erection of a mix of grand hotels commenced along the seafront together with more modest lodging and boarding houses. These were supplemented by new churches, banks, the town hall, a market and in 1823 the first pier was opened. Brighton had not only become a modern tourist resort but was also home to increasing numbers of people who chose to retire to the seaside, as this became fashionable and affordable for some elements of society.¹²

Likewise, Bournemouth's growth was similarly intense: it expanded from a small collection of dwellings in 1812 to only thirty properties in 1841, but it was the coming of the railway in 1870 that tripled the town's population to just under 17,000 in 1881.¹³ Through the nineteenth century, Bournemouth developed from being a small resort along the lines of a Regency Spa largely controlled by the local land-owning Tapps-Gervis family. It was transformed into a town whereby the local Corporation had a more significant influence and recognised the opportunities for developing commercially driven holiday infrastructure and amenities.¹⁴

Concomitant with this growth, a hierarchy of resorts were created in which tourism reflected a visitor's social status and destinations became very selective, with a clear pecking order emerging down to some resorts that were considered common and vulgar. Anderson and Swinglehurst recognised that the Victorians who went to the seaside were

¹¹ Lenoard. J. Lickorish and A. G. Kershaw, 'Tourism between 1840-1940,' in *The Management of Tourism*, ed. A.J. Burkart and S. Medlik (London: Heinemann, 1975), 11-26

¹² Stephen Williams, *Tourism Geography* (London: Routledge, 2003), 27-28

¹³ Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, 23

¹⁴ Hassan, *The Seaside, Health and the Environment*, 38

highly class conscious.¹⁵ Several factors contributed to this hierarchy. Firstly there were the uncontrollable factors such as simple proximity to the major cities which the resorts serviced, where Brighton being closer to London had a lower social tone than Bournemouth and certainly Torquay. Secondly, for those resorts that did succeed in retaining a pronounced level of respectability and a higher social status, there was a definite case of conspicuous consumption among the clientele who wished to stay in these locations. It was highly respected and honourable for the gentleman of leisure to consume freely the best of all goods and services. To help achieve this, newspapers such as *The Queen*, a title catering for the servant-keeping class, listed chic places and exclusive hotels to visit.

These visitors also wanted to engage themselves in the pursuit of pleasure and entertainment. So, the facilitation of golfing opportunities was an absolute necessity for resorts wishing to cater for the popularity of golf, capitalising on the developing demand for golf tourism. In an age of opportunity and commercialisation, these new golfing tourists found entrepreneurs willing to provide them with facilities and services to satisfy their demands, with hoteliers, railway companies, local corporations and a growing network of golf clubs combining to provide for their every need.¹⁶ These resorts received significant patronage due to the game's growing popularity; hence, catering for golf and its supporting infrastructure provided a good return on investment for the enterprising landowner, hotelier and club. This supports Durie and Huggins' suggestion of a close relationship between the tone of a resort and the type of sports played and watched there. They even suggest that different sports positively helped shape and influence the tone of individual resorts.¹⁷ In contrast, Huggins and Tolson suggested the impact of the railways on the development of sport has been crudely overstated. They do, however, agree that for some sports, such as golf, tennis and hockey, the railway expansion made accessibility easier and linked to the appeal of

¹⁵ Janice Anderson and Edmund Swinglehurst, *The Victorian and Edwardian Seaside* (London: Country Life Books, 1978), 9

¹⁶ Walton, *The English Seaside Resort*, 40

¹⁷ Alastair J. Durie and Mike Huggins, 'Sport, social tone and the seaside resorts of Great Britain, c.1850–1914', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 15, no.1 (1998): 173-187

social activity and athleticism to the middle classes.¹⁸ Pope notes that investments in sports facilities, including a golf course, created traffic and had the potential to increase long-term income for the railway companies.¹⁹

Initially, there had been some conflict over the level of diversification the railway companies undertook. Some thought that they should not be widening the scope of their business outside of transport; this included some concerns by their shareholders, but quickly the economic benefits were realised, and the fears disappeared.²⁰ With this new-built physical infrastructure in place, railways and holidays, or at least excursions, were quickly connected and became prevalent forms of escape from routine daily life.

3.3 Safer and Quicker by Rail

As indicated above, a transport system was needed to provide the traveller with a cheaper, quicker, more frequent, and a more comfortable alternative to taking a coach over the roads and turnpikes. The Victorian period has frequently been dubbed, ‘the railway age’.²¹ When Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837, Britain had already commenced a massive, albeit *ad hoc*, railway building programme that quickly witnessed an octopus-like spread of routes across the country. Although this programme was not planned or regulated, all of the major towns and cities were keen to be part of the ever-expanding network and numerous new railway companies were formed to service this demand.²²

Three companies in the South-East provided the region’s railway network: the London Brighton and South Coast Railway (LBSCR); the London and South Western Railway Company (L&SWR); and, the South Eastern and Chatham Railway (SE&CR), formed in 1899 with the merger of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway (LCDR) and the

¹⁸ Mike Huggins and J. Tolson, ‘The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain: a critical reassessment’, *Journal of Transport History* 22, no. 2 (2001): 99-115

¹⁹ Pope, ‘Railway companies and resort hotels’, 62-73.

²⁰ Jack Simmons, ‘Railways, Hotels, and Tourism in Great Britain 1839-1914’ *Journal of Contemporary History* 19, no. 2 (1984): 201-222.

²¹ Huggins and Tolson, ‘The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain’, 99-115.

²² Jack Simmons, ‘Railways, Hotels, and Tourism in Great Britain’, 201-222.

South Eastern Railway (SER). The growth was phenomenal, in 1835 there were 471 miles of track in the UK, and this had increased to 30,843 miles by 1885.²³ These railways permitted all classes the chance to travel to the seaside and coastal towns for entertainment or relaxation. However, it was not universally popular, with the Duke of Wellington famously remarking that he did not, ‘welcome the chance for the masses...to move around.’ This sentiment has effectively been supported by Huggins and Tolson who have argued that a negative aspect of the railway expansion was the ability to carry the urban roughs to the seaside and rural areas where they caused anti-social behaviour.²⁴

Naturally, all manner of tourists journeyed on the railways to the South Coast for their holidays, but specifically there were many positive examples of the partnership between golf and the railways that provided the catalyst for local development and the accrual of multiple mutual benefits. Durie and Huggins noted that in the 1890s, where the development of the land adjacent to the golf links took place, the land value almost doubled. This was almost entirely due to the proximity of a fashionable golf club(s).²⁵ In the South-East of England, one instance of how the railways and golf combined to provide an uplift to the reputation and consequent land-value of an area was shown in East Sussex. Great foresight was shown in 1905 when the Cooden Golf Halt (station) was built on the Bexhill to Eastbourne line, even though there was no actual course in existence to play on and the station only served a growing area of new high-quality housing. It was simple speculation that the station would cater for golfers and it would take seven more years until a course was laid out, but the naming was a part of a gentrification process of upgrading the local area which the new line ran through.²⁶ In the inter-war years, with its exemplary railway connections, the club was considered to be an excellent tournament venue, hosting the English Ladies Championship in 1924.²⁷

²³ Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, 21.

²⁴ Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 17; Huggins and Tolson, ‘The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain’, 99-115

²⁵ Durie and Huggins, ‘Sport, social tone and the seaside resorts’, 173-187

²⁶ A further advance was changing the name of the bay that the future course overlooked from The Sluice to Normans Bay in recognition of its proximity to Pevensey and the site of William the Conqueror’s landing in 1066.

²⁷ Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 205-206

This all gave rise to the creation of a holiday industry, which supported many new businesses catering for these masses that were now able to visit, and that required a wide range of supporting services and facilities to provide them with entertainment while they were away from home.²⁸

The original Bournemouth GC offers a further illustration of how the railways enabled the development of golf through the provision of accessible and affordable transport. Founded in 1890, Bournemouth GC, initially played on ground a short walk from Brockenhurst Station, which was twenty-five minutes by train from Bournemouth. An arrangement with the L&SWR therefore provided reduced return fares for members at 4s. for first-class or 2s. 9d. for second-class travel.²⁹ This close partnership between the L&SWR and golf in Bournemouth continued in the early twentieth century, as evidenced by an article in the *Bournemouth Evening Echo* in 1905. It highlighted how the Corporation and the railway company were working closely together to design a timetable that worked for golfers looking to visit the resort.³⁰ This harmonious relationship continued after World War One as demonstrated by a 1927 advert for Winter Golf in Bournemouth. It was placed in *The London Illustrated News* by the Town Council, and it identified that there were eleven fast-trains a day from Waterloo to Bournemouth and through trains from the Midlands and the North were also provided.³¹ This form of cooperation is reinforced by Cole and Durack who, as a third example, highlighted how the railways played a crucial role in the development of resorts with several posters produced in partnership with the local councils as part of joint advertising campaigns.³² In the 1930s the Southern Railway also named their holiday trains for added publicity, adopting titles such as the Brighton Belle and Bournemouth Belle. The trains were composed of distinctive Pullman stock to provide an extra sense of glamour.³³ These transport arrangements were promoted as being

²⁸ Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 17

²⁹ County Borough of Bournemouth, Golf Courses of the Corporation, Regulations, March 1905.

³⁰ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 21 December 1905

³¹ *London Illustrated News*, 26 November 1927

³² Beverley Cole and Richard Durack, *Railway Posters, 1923-1947* (York: National Railway Museum, 1992), 21

³³ Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 22

‘Safer and Quicker by Rail.’ This continues to show how the resorts aimed to attract golfing tourists to the South Coast in the winter months, with a promise of sunshine and beautiful scenery under headlines that promoted the region’s climatic advantages, such as ‘South for Winter Sunshine.’

Another instance of mutual partnership working between the railways and golfers was when in 1900, extra carriages had to be added to trains running from London to Sandwich on Fridays to help prevent the overcrowding on the services; such was the high demand from golfers. The golfers also benefited from special fares at only 13s. 6d. for a first-class return from London.³⁴ Furthermore, special arrangements for golfing spectators travelling to Sandwich were advertised in *The Times* alongside the report on the day’s play when the 1914 Amateur Championships were held on the links. Listed as special fast trains for the convenience of spectators travelling to Deal and Sandwich from London Bridge and Charing Cross, they confirmed that first-class travel was available for a journey of just over two hours from the capital to the coast.³⁵ At another course, located near the small Kent coastal town of Littlestone, the weekend golfers were challenged in that its rail connections back to London on a Sunday evening were not prompt. Consequently, a meeting held in 1894 between some highly influential members of the golf club and the SER resulted in a new service to Ashford, and then a connection with the Continental Express to transport the London golfers back to the city in less than two hours. According to a review in the *1888 Golfing Annual*, the cost of a four-day return ticket was 15s.³⁶ As the popularity grew, 80% of the club’s members lived in London; the mutual benefit was evidenced by the railway company providing a hundred season tickets for members at £10 each.³⁷ The railway companies frequently offered subsidies on ticket prices for golfers to further encourage them to travel by train.³⁸ The construction of branch lines or light railways often provided a transport solution by linking golf clubs, in difficult to access locations, with the main railway

³⁴ David Dobby, *Golf on the Kent Coast*, (Harwich: Fore Golf Publications, 1993),10; Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 160

³⁵ *The Times*, 21 May 1914.

³⁶ *1888 Golfing Annual*, 95.

³⁷ Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 161-162.

³⁸ Simmons, ‘Railways, Hotels and Tourism’, 201-222, Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 17-18.

network. Rye GC was formed in 1894 and was one that initially challenged golfers with problematic access from the network to the course, as there was no proper roadway through the marshlands. The solution was the construction of a narrow-gauge tramway for the 1¾ mile journey from Rye to the Golf Links Station that took 8½ minutes and cost 6*d.* for a first-class return. The cost of the scheme was £2,800 and was funded by some of the wealthy golfers and a few commercially minded individuals who had an interest in the adjacent Rye harbour.³⁹ Likewise, at Sandwich in 1900, a small tramway was built between the main station and Sandwich Bay; this facilitated golfers with easy access to the links at Royal St. George's. Whereas previously, access had only been possible by visitors undertaking a bumpy fifteen-minute journey from the station to the course by horse-drawn buggy.⁴⁰ Finally, the Devil's Dyke Railway was a short branch line that ran from the Brighton to Portsmouth line to just below the summit of the Devil's Dyke and situated before the terminus station was the private Golf Club Halt that opened in 1891. According to Clark, the Halt was solely for use by the members of the Brighton & Hove GC. No shelter or lighting was ever provided, the Halt never appeared in any timetable and golfers had to pay for fares to the Dyke station. However, in 1895 a bell was installed in the golf clubhouse to inform members that the train had departed the Dyke station; this gave them sufficient time to finish their drinks and walk to the platform to catch the train back down to Aldrington Station on the mainline. The charge by the railway for this privilege was initially 10*s.* a year, but it was increased to £2 in 1922 until the line closed in 1938.⁴¹ This latter case, in particular, shows the influence and importance that golf had with the railways in allowing these concessions and preferential treatment.

3.4 Ferries and Golf Tourism

The layout of the British railway system was designed to connect the British Isles via the many ports that offered passage to the Continent. The best-known routes were from Dover and Folkestone to Calais and Boulogne. Additionally services sailed to the

³⁹ Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 178

⁴⁰ Dobby, *Golf on the Kent Coast*, 10

⁴¹ Paul Clark, *The Railways of Devil's Dyke* (Sheffield: Turntable Publications, 1976), 23

British islands off the South Coast of England that could only be reached by sea.⁴² In the South of England, regular steamship crossings ran from the mainland to the Isle of Wight since the 1830s. Fifty years later, when visitors began wanting to travel to play golf on the Isle of Wight, they needed to cross the Solent by one of several different paddle steamer routes.⁴³ Two of these routes were provided by ships owned and operated by Southern Railway, and so an integrated transport solution was available with combined through tickets on offer.⁴⁴ During the summer months from May to October, paddle steamers also ran between Portsmouth, Southsea, Seaview and Bembridge docking at Bembridge's pier with a daily crossing of about one hour. As the size of ships increased, it was not possible to access harbour at low tide, but it did mean more visitors could be accommodated. This allowed easy access to the island's most prestigious course The Royal Isle of Wight GC. For some of the most affluent visitors there was the opportunity for their independent tourism, sailing over to the Isle of Wight on the high tide, playing golf and enjoying a fine luncheon, before sailing back to the mainland on the next tide.⁴⁵

Golf in the Channel Islands was also attractive, with the Royal Jersey GC founded in 1878 and Royal Guernsey in 1890, both offering excellent golf in scenic surroundings, complemented by, according to Macpherson, the availability of high-quality food at both venues.⁴⁶ Travel to the Channel Islands was available from Southampton or Weymouth and according to an advertisement in *Golf*, 'The boats on both lines are excellent. When arriving at Guernsey, the golfer makes for one of the excellent hotels. The visitor may enjoy golf at [Royal] Guernsey GC for £1 10s. for six months or 7s. 6d. per week'.⁴⁷ These two golfing offers, for extended periods, are an indication that there was a clear and distinct market for golfing tourism on both of the principal Channel Islands.

⁴² *The Times*, 15 August 1921

⁴³ Michael Freeman and Derek Aldcroft, *Transport in Victorian Britain* (Manchester University Press, 1988), 199: Wheeler, 'An ambitious club on a small scale', 477-497.

⁴⁴ *The Times*, 12 June 1929

⁴⁵ *Golf Illustrated*, July 2013, 161

⁴⁶ Scott Macpherson, *Golf's Royal Clubs* (The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, 2014), 166, 154

⁴⁷ *Golf*, 31 March 1899

Another off-shore golfing destination that was served by ships of the Southern Railway was the north coast of France. The operation of shipping was an ancillary service that provided the railway company with additional income and included within this revenue stream was the cross-channel golfing market. They promoted these golfing destinations alongside their English counterparts as part of one holiday golf experience, to which the company provided access. To the South Coast golf clubs and resorts these would have been considered as rivals, but for the railway company they offered exciting, complementary additions to their portfolio of golfing destinations served by their trains and ferries, and therefore are considered relevant to this study, even if clearly not located on the South Coast of England. *Some Friendly Fairways* produced in 1929 by Southern Railway included a chapter on the merits of the golf at Le Touquet, complete with the narrative of the journey from Victoria Station via ferry to Boulogne. Listings in the 1931 edition of the railway company's *Golfing in Southern England and on the Continent* even identified seven daily sailings from the Kentish ports to France running from 09:00 to 20:20, with further services from Southampton to Le Havre and St. Malo.⁴⁸ The inclusion of the ferry timetables and the particulars of the European golf courses in this publication confirm that Continental Europe had become a trendy alternative place to visit for the golfing tourist. As Martínez identifies, 'leisured people did not seem to be worried about national borders... they embodied a lifestyle, the Belle Époque, which was interrupted by the Great War'.⁴⁹ For Southern Railway they saw the golf courses in northern France as an extension of their enabling role; one that they could promote to the well-heeled elements of the market that enjoyed golf tourism along the South Coast of England.

Golf had arrived on the Normandy coast in 1897 when a course was established at Dieppe Pourville following the influx of English tourists who were initially visiting for the sea bathing. Further courses were built at Deauville 1899, Cabourg 1907 and Etretat

⁴⁸ *Golfing in Southern England and on the Continent*, 1931

⁴⁹ Gerardo Rebanal Martínez, 'Golf, enterprise, and tourism in Belle Époque Europe c.1900–1914' *Journal of Tourism History* 11, no. 2, (2019): 124–143

in 1908, as what had been small coastal villages became popular tourist resorts with the British traveller (Figure 3.1).⁵⁰



Figure 3.1: 1908 Poster for golf at Etretat
(www.DriverandDriver.com)

One of the most popular and well-respected courses was Le Touquet, located just south of Boulogne. Unlike the other Normandy courses it was not developed by the locals, but by an English business syndicate whose aim was to create a resort involving the organisation of golf activities and other sports in a country club-style for the sporting tourist. The real driving force behind the development of Le Touquet as a tourism resort was a French syndicate who left a group of English businessmen to focus on expanding and managing the sporting activities. Starting in 1903 Nicholas Lane, ‘Pa’ Jackson and Allen Stoneham would spend the next twenty-five years investing in the development of Le Touquet and Le Touquet Golf Resort, eventually making the name synonymous with the finest Continental European golf. Jackson is better known as a sports administrator, who had previously been on the Committee of the Football Association and the founder

⁵⁰ Driver & Driver, Playing golf in France, <http://driveranddriver.com/en/play-a-golf-course-in-france/golf-courses-along-normandy-coast/> (accessed 1 July 2020).

of the legendary Corinthian FC. The French syndicate was responsible for the construction of The Atlantic Hotel on the promenade, but a planned railway link failed to materialise; therefore visitors were required to use a tram service from the nearest railway station at Etaples with a stop conveniently close to the golf course. The price of a weekend first-class fare from London Victoria to Etaples in 1929 was £74 8s. and reflects the premium price required to experience the golf and all the social trappings at this prestigious resort.⁵¹ The promotional link between the railway and golf is seen in the design of the winning poster for a competition organised by the tourist office in 1925 (Figure 3.2).⁵²



Figure 3.2: Railway (Chemin de fer du Nord) Poster for Le Touquet
(www.Pictorem.com)

The golf was one of the major appeals of the resort and contributed considerably towards the economic objectives of the project. With the addition of the Golf Hotel and a second course built in 1930, Le Touquet-Paris-Plage would become one of Europe's most fashionable resorts during the Roaring Twenties and 1930s, the playground of the rich, the famous and the aristocracy.⁵³

⁵¹ EP Leigh-Bennett, *Some Friendly Fairways*, (Southern Railways, 1929), 57

⁵² Chemin de Fer du Nord was the name of the railway company and La Mer (The Sea) and La Foret (The Forest) were the names of the two course at Le Touquet.

⁵³ Martínez 'Golf, enterprise, and tourism in Belle Époque Europe', 124–143.

Le Touquet was another course regularly visited by the Prince of Wales during the 1920s. According to the *Winnipeg Tribute* in 1926, ‘the Prince was very fond of a quiet weekend at Le Touquet’ and added, ‘that he usually took a suite of rooms at the Hotel Hermitage.’ *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* waxed lyrically how the British holidaying golfer spent vast sums of money visiting and playing on Le Touquet’s excellent links before retiring to enjoy the luxurious entertainment that was available at Paris Plage.⁵⁴ Another French course that was advertised as being accessible via London, Waterloo and just eight hours from Southampton was Dinard in Brittany with its excellent golf course and famous tennis court.⁵⁵ This course was located just opposite the port of St. Malo and in 1922 all-inclusive accommodation at the Hotel Michelet was available at 5s.⁵⁶ In Belgium, a conscious effort to attract British tourists occurred in 1903 when King Leopold II oversaw the establishment of a course at Ostend.⁵⁷ Although the clubhouse and course were destroyed in World War One, they were rebuilt and remained popular with the British as in 1928 *The Times* advertised golf in Ostend as an activity where readers might spend ‘Whitsun on the Continent’.⁵⁸ These examples of autonomous and continental travel are further examples of the economic status of people who were playing golf abroad in the inter-war years. The cost was beyond the reach of all but the wealthiest, as cross-channel ferry fees were very expensive. For example, a return crossing between Dover and Calais in 1923 for an adult was listed at 16s. first-class and 12s. 6d. second.⁵⁹ Additionally, a nine-day tour to Dinard, in 1929 was advertised in *The Times* as being from £6 19s.⁶⁰ Moreover, this included travel tickets, holiday accommodation, English Breakfast and excursions.⁶¹ Ostend, Le Touquet, and the other French courses were rivals to the English South Coast courses for the patronage of the golfing tourist. However, as access to them was facilitated by the same transport companies who were also promoting and helping to

⁵⁴ *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 19 July 1928

⁵⁵ *Illustrated London News*, 17 June 1922

⁵⁶ *Illustrated London News*, 24 June 1922

⁵⁷ *The Times*, 15 May 1913.

⁵⁸ *The Times*, 12 May 1928.

⁵⁹ *Dover Express and East Kent News*, 9 March 1923.

⁶⁰ A cost of £6 19s in 1929 was equal to 21 days wages for a Skilled Tradesman, according to the National Archives currency converter.

⁶¹ *The Times*, 4 April 1929

sustain the English resorts, they were effectively part of an all-encompassing golf tourism promotional campaign and helped to generate the demand for golf tourism. For instance, one of the directors of the SERC was Cosmo Bonsor, an entrepreneur who was also closely associated with Walton Heath GC, one of the leading clubs in Surrey. As an entrepreneur and a golfing-man, Bonsor recognised how Le Touquet would have appealed to the same set who valued a club with a high social capital and would have encouraged the railway company to promote its qualities and accessibility.⁶²

3.5 Motor-Cars and Golf Tourism

One of the biggest threats to the railway companies' near monopoly in providing transport solutions to the domestic tourist destinations in the inter-war years came from the motor-car. Urry states that the most significant development in tourism transport between the wars was the increase in private motor-car ownership, the figures increasing to over two million by 1939 with the motor-car liberating the middle classes in particular.⁶³ Although the date when the first motor-car appeared on the road in Britain is unknown, *The Autocar* was promoting the Motor Car Club in July 1896, which suggests that there were already sufficient numbers of drivers in the country to justify the formation and promotion of such a club. Weed and Bull agree that the motor-car did have a significant impact on sports tourism and enjoyed a substantial advantage over the railways. It gave access to smaller resorts that were not easily reached by the train network while still being large enough to carry modest amounts of equipment, namely golf clubs.

Before World War One, the ownership of motor-cars was limited to a few people in the upper classes. By the mid-1920s, however, a social revolution had begun to take place with the upper-middle-classes, the emerging golfing set, starting to be able to afford motor-cars and so enjoy greater transport freedom, opening up access to new destinations for holidays and leisure. For example, research shows private motor-car

⁶² Martínez 'Golf, enterprise, and tourism in Belle Époque Europe', 124–143.

⁶³ Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 25

registration in Kent trebled from 25,000 in 1926 to more than 78,000 in 1938.⁶⁴ However, the average cost of a motor-car in 1932, the mid-point of this growth period, was £295. In contrast, the average salary for the middle-income groups was £250 p.a.⁶⁵ This demonstrates that privately owned motor transport was still a luxury for the majority of the population who always relied on the trains and buses to travel. Although motor-car ownership in 1938 had climbed to 20% of the population, the roads leading to the more popular resorts in the South of England were frequently experiencing the curse of the motor vehicle, the traffic jam.⁶⁶ This led some corporations to build new roads, the first significant investment in roads since the turnpikes. It even saw the first by-passes; previously towns had welcomed the passing trade, but they now looked to avoid congestion in their centres. When motorists did arrive at the resorts, they were faced with difficulties finding places to park. Brighton could be visited by 25,000 motor-cars a day in peak times by 1936. Consequently local authorities had to decide whether to charge fees for parking close to the beaches and major attractions, or to prevent it entirely and to provide car parks further inland. This constraint enabled the railways to maintain their position as the principal mode of holiday transport up to the start of World War Two.⁶⁷

Here we see that the development of motor-cars meant that the golf course did not have to be within walking distance of home or the station. The course could be ten or twenty miles away and still be accessible.⁶⁸ This positive change in accessibility is supported by Browning who commented that, ‘when I first played the Royal Isle of Wight I came to the course by ferry from Bembridge. Golfers nowadays are so set on getting everywhere by motor-car that for convenience, the club moved to a new clubhouse on the other side of the links’.⁶⁹ Another example of the increased use of the motor-car to access golf is demonstrated in an account of the 1936 Admirals v Generals, inter-

⁶⁴ Frank Jessup, *Kent History Illustrated* (Kent County Council, 1966), 68-69

⁶⁵ Pope, ‘Railway Companies and Resort Hotels’, 62-73

⁶⁶ Sean O’Connell, *The Car and British Society: Class Gender and Motoring 1896-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 11

⁶⁷ Weed and Bull, *Sports Tourism*, 11; John Walton, *The British Seaside – holidays and resorts in the twentieth century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 78

⁶⁸ Geoffrey Cousins, *Golf in Britain* (London: Routledge, 1975), 90

⁶⁹ The Royal Isle of Wight Golf Club Handbook, 1949, 5

services golf match played at Camberley Heath GC. During the afternoon singles play, one keenly fought game was all-square when one of the Admiral's approach shot ran through the green and came to rest amongst the parked cars behind the green. In a very sporting act, the watching generals physically moved several motor-cars to enable the Admiral to chip his ball close to the hole before sinking the putt to win the hole.⁷⁰ This article in *The Times* illustrates that by the late 1930s it would be commonplace for those that could afford motor-cars, represented here by high-ranking military officers, to drive them, or be driven in them, to their golf games.

Three examples further demonstrate the connection between the increasing popularity of the motor-car and golf. Firstly, the Royal Automobile Club (RAC) was founded in 1897, with the primary purpose to promote the motor car and its place in society. To help achieve this goal, in 1913, the RAC acquired Woodcote Park, Surrey to use as a venue for large car gatherings to take place, but also to provide golf for its members in a smart country club environment.⁷¹ This investment represents an acknowledgement amongst the hierarchy at the RAC of their members' shared love of motor-cars and golf and how a rural venue would equally cater for both.

Secondly, launched in 1922, *Car & Golf* was a weekly publication that promoted itself as, 'the only journal for the motoring golfer and the golfing motorist'. *Car & Golf* was a development of *The Car Illustrated* that had been founded by The Hon. John Montagu MP, later 2nd Baron Montagu of Beaulieu, in 1902. The new journal was advertised in *The Times* at £1 for a year's subscription. The advert promised to provide the motorist who golfs with details of all the week's golf fixtures, results, news and gossip. It also vowed to include RAC club news, pictures of leading golf courses, motoring and golf cartoons, practical tips on golf and non-technical motoring issues, features on the world of feminine golf and motoring and golfing stories by leading writers.⁷² Its life was short-lived as according to a recent review (2005) in *The Automobile*, it contained, 'insufficient information about the game to satisfy the golfer and not enough about

⁷⁰ *Through the Green*, September 2014; *The Times*, 21 May 1936

⁷¹ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle classes*, 245.

⁷² *The Times*, 6 April 1922.

motoring to lure readers of *The Autocar* and *The Motor* into the fold'. The title changed hands in 1929 and was absorbed by *The Motor Owner*, which itself disappeared in May 1930.⁷³ Attempts were made to trace editions of *Car & Golf* to discover what it had said explicitly about golf tourism in the south-east. Unfortunately, this did not prove successful as neither the National Motor Museum nor the British Golf Museum had any copies in their collections.

A third and final example of the link between golfing holidays and motoring also appeared in 1922 in *The Times* entitled, *Golf Motoring Holidays*. It advised readers that this activity had become one of the most popular forms of a holiday for married couples. It proposed that the golfing holiday-makers only needed to pack a little hand-luggage and two sets of clubs before setting off into the countryside and driving sixty to seventy miles to find an attractive course with a suitable hotel within easy reach, to satisfy their needs. This article was actually an advertisement for accident insurance, available through *The Times*, that would provide benefits for death, injuries from travelling or from sporting accidents.⁷⁴ It is particularly interesting that the phrase 'within easy reach' was included as it demonstrates that a distance of up to seventy miles to drive for golf was not thought to be exceptional. The inclusion that a stay in a suitable hotel would be needed to follow the golf clearly shows how driving to one's golfing holidays had become so popular that the newspaper deemed it worthwhile to promote this form of holiday insurance cover to its readers. Although cover for sporting accidents was included, the advert only referred to, 'if the reader is killed by an accident to a private motor-car.' So the risk of death from being struck by a golf-ball or club appears to have been considered minimal.

3.6 How Hotels Enabled the Growth of Golf Tourism

Regardless of the mode of transport, as the above example shows, once the golfing tourist had arrived at their destination, their next requirement was a place to stay, and the hotel industry was equally quick to recognise the opportunities that the golfing

⁷³ Patrick Collins, National Motor Museum Trust, Email correspondence, (11 February 2019)

⁷⁴ *The Times*, 27 July 1922

market provided. As a newcomer to the established urban infrastructure, railways were not always able to access the heart of towns and cities. Consequently, many railway stations were built on the outskirts of the existing settlements. This, in turn, meant that new hotels had to be constructed to cater for this obstacle, or where access was possible, the delivery of large numbers of people meant that the old coaching inns were not able to cope with masses.⁷⁵ In contrast, the railway companies were relatively slow in building resort hotels in locations where people were taking their holidays.⁷⁶ But by 1913, the railway companies owned 112 hotels in Britain on which they had spent £8,152,560, and this contribution was significant in transforming the style and public expectations of hotels in Britain forever.⁷⁷ Southern Railways owned nine of these hotels, and three were ideally located to service the emerging golfing market; the South Eastern Hotel in Deal, the South Western Hotel in Southampton and the Imperial in Hythe.⁷⁸ The South Eastern Hotel was built in 1898 by SER, primarily to exploit the expected upsurge in general holiday traffic, whilst also being ideally located for the nearby championship courses in the town and just along the coast at Sandwich. *Golf in the South* advertised that, ‘weekend-fares, Fridays to Tuesdays, were available on express trains from Charing Cross to Deal at 23s. 9d. for first-class or 14s. 3d. for third class.’ It described the hotel as, ‘an excellent place for golfers who want a long weekend in seaside peace’.⁷⁹ Southampton’s South Western Hotel was built in 1867, but the developer went bankrupt and the hotel was taken over by the L&SWR in 1871, enabling the company to link it physically with the city’s railway terminus station. Under Southern Railway, the hotel and the station served the prestigious liner trade which was booming during the 1920s and 1930s.⁸⁰ *Golf in the South* identified it as, ‘a very comfortable and modernised hotel from where you may enjoy a day’s golf’.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Simmons, ‘Railways, Hotels, and Tourism’, 201-222

⁷⁶ Pope, ‘Railway Companies and Resort Hotels’, 62-73

⁷⁷ Pope, ‘Railway Companies and Resort Hotels’, 62-73

⁷⁸ C.F. Denby Marshall, *A History of Southern Railway* (London: The Southern Railway Company, 1946), 68

⁷⁹ E.P. Leigh-Bennett, *Golf in the South* (Southern Railways, 1935), 7

⁸⁰ *The Graphic*, 1 September 1923

⁸¹ *The Graphic*, 52

The third hotel, the Imperial, was built in 1880 but it was originally known as the Seabrook Hotel until it changed its name to this more regal title in 1890 after the Prince of Wales opened the adjacent Princes Parade. The Imperial boasted being proud of having, ‘the most recent appliances for securing that luxurious comfort which enters so largely into modern life and manners’.⁸² It was rightly known as a railway golfing hotel in the manner of its Scottish equivalents in that it was directly served by a tram service and possessed its own golf course. The tramway, albeit horse-drawn, was opened in 1891 and connected the hotel to Hythe Station and brought visitors directly to the hotel’s front door. The service had been suspended during World War One and the spectacle of a horse-drawn tram, with its open toast-rack carriages, was considered to be amusing and old-fashioned upon its resumption.⁸³ Indeed the service only survived for a few years after the end of hostilities, with the tracks removed in 1922, as more modern forms of transport became available. The 9-hole golf course was laid out on land adjacent to the hotel in 1906 by the owners, the South Eastern and Chatham Railway, (SE&CR) to specifically provide a golf course for guests staying in the hotel. An early report in the *Folkestone Herald* was very positive and advocated that it would be a valuable addition for the hotel and an attractive attraction for the town. It went on to add, ‘The Imperial can boast of the only links belonging to a hotel in England. Tickets for play will be obtained from the hotel and preference on the links will be given to hotel-residents.’⁸⁴ The opening of the course was celebrated with a match between two well-known professional players, Jack Rowe and Roland Jones, as was the traditional practice. The local paper championed that the London daily journals and the golfing press were unanimous in agreeing that more perfect natural seaside links do not exist along the coast.⁸⁵ This was a bold and parochial claim with Royal St. George’s GC situated less than twenty-five miles to the east. The course was located on a narrow strip of land between the Military Canal and the sea. During World War One, two bombs

⁸² Hotel History, Hythe Imperial, <https://www.hytheimperial.co.uk/hotel-history/> (accessed 19 October 2020)

⁸³ *Folkestone Herald*, 20 August 1921

⁸⁴ *Folkestone Herald*, 16 June 1906

⁸⁵ *Folkestone Herald*, 30 June 1906

were dropped on the course as part of the first daylight bombing raid on England.⁸⁶ Thus the Imperial was one of the railway's finest and most accessible South Coast hotels and was able to cater for the golfing tourist with its own nine holes of golf.

There was conversely a relative paucity of railway owned hotels built to serve South Coast golf courses, compared with Scotland where the construction of hotels to cater for the excellent golf courses along the coastline was more commonplace. Hotels at Cruden Bay, Dornoch and Turnberry were opened before World War One and then Gleneagles was added to this group soon after the war, with the latter two becoming particularly successful.⁸⁷ The relative distance of the Scottish course from its target tourist market, along with the heritage factor associated with playing the courses in Scotland, would have encouraged longer stays and increased levels of revenue. This would have generated more significant investment in golfing hotels by the Scottish railways than their South Coast counterparts.

In contrast to earlier times, however, Pope argues that the greater use of the private motor-car as the 1930s progressed did have some negative impact on the railway companies resort hotels' turnover and profits.⁸⁸ The freedom that the motor-car offered meant the golfing tourist was less reliant on the combined travel and stay packages that the railway companies offered and could access alternatively independent accommodation. Yet for those golfing tourists who were still reliant on the railways to access the resorts and outside of Deal, Southampton and Hythe with their railway owned hotels, there is much evidence of the railways working in partnership with independent local hotels. While this did not amount to seamless package offers there were undoubtedly close working relationships. The Southern Railway's publication *Golf in the South* included an index of courses together with remarks on the local hotel options. For the would-be tourists playing at Royal Eastbourne GC, they could learn that hotels were close at hand. Similarly, within the same publication, it was stated that

⁸⁶ Dobby, *Golf on the Kent Coast*, 91

⁸⁷ Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain', 99-115 ; Simmons, 'Railways, Hotels, and Tourism', 201-222; Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 17-18.

⁸⁸ Pope, 'Railway Companies and Resort Hotels', 62-73.

a hotel was located a few minutes from Broadstone GC, near Bournemouth.⁸⁹ Also regarding Bournemouth, there is an example of the Corporation working with the railways and promoting the local hotels in a 1914 advert in the *Illustrated London News* that identified; the good train service from Waterloo, the hotels with quite normal tariffs and the existence of fine municipal golf courses.⁹⁰ Finally, *The Times* carried a notice from Southern Railways promoting a list of destinations it reached that offered, Summer Holiday Places, for 1929 and included a reference to the Hotel Metropole in Folkestone with its access to many fine golf links.⁹¹ More examples of the links between the enablers, the railways, hotels and the local authorities, are given in the following chapter when the marketing of golfing holidays on the South Coast is examined.

Of course it was not just the railway companies who were in the business of satisfying the holiday accommodation needs. The majority of hotels were built by local entrepreneurs as speculative ventures to capitalise on the rapidly rising level of demand. A classic example is when Dr Laidlaw Purves and fellow Scottish golfer Henry Lamb formed what was to become Royal St. George's and they discussed their proposal with the owner of the Bell Hotel in Sandwich. The proprietor quickly saw the potential and expanded his establishment to cater to this new market of affluent golfing tourists who would descend upon the town from the capital for the weekend.⁹² A simple but an ingenious system was soon devised by the club informing golfers, who subsequently travelled to Sandwich and were staying at the Bell Hotel, about the accessibility to the course. A tall flagpole was erected outside the club-house, which was visible from the hotel; different colour flags were flown to inform visitors when golf was not permissible on the links. A red flag meant that play was restricted to members only and visitors should go to play on Prince's or Royal Cinque Ports, a white flag said that major events were in progress on the course and day visitors could not play but were welcome to spectate.⁹³ The demand from the visiting golfing tourists quickly outstripped what the Bell Hotel and other local hotels could provide. In 1906 this encouraged Harry Mallaby-

⁸⁹ *Golf in the South*, 101

⁹⁰ *Illustrate London News*, 17 October 1914.

⁹¹ *The Times*, 11 June 1929

⁹² Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 160

⁹³ Dobby, *Golf on the Kent Coast*, 10

Deeley, who had already leased the land and then overseen the laying out the links of Prince's GC, to build the impressive Guildford Hotel on the seafront close to the course. It was advertised to provide golf, relaxation and seclusion with high-quality cuisine and comfort at a cost, in the 1920s, of only ten guineas for four days, including golf at Prince's or Deal.⁹⁴

The golfing tourist was not just accommodated at those hotels that were built in the same towns as the golf courses. The opportunity to capitalise on this new and increasing market in golf tourism was also recognised by a host of smaller hotels with the aim of encouraging visitors to frequent their establishments. For instance, the Granville Hotel in Ramsgate, located eight miles to the north of Sandwich, was very keen to capitalise on the lucrative market. According to an entry in Southern Railway's guide-book *Golfing in Southern England and on the Continent*, the Granville promoted its location as being, 'within easy distance of the classic golf links of the world' and that it offered special terms for golfers.⁹⁵ The twin advantages of a hotel's location and accessibility were featured in an announcement in *Golf* for the Royal Hotel on Hayling Island. The eager golfer was informed that the hotel was located adjoining the links of Hayling GC and that express trains from Waterloo, Victoria and London Bridge to Havant and Hayling Island were available to transport them to their golfing holiday destination.⁹⁶

Golf was not the only attraction available at the numerous seaside resorts and nor was golf the only reason for a holiday at the seaside. As Hudson informed us, golf for some was just one activity that would be enjoyed while away which he described as Tourism Golf and hence the promotion of day-ticket green-fees, in addition to deals for a longer period of golfing endeavours.⁹⁷ Consequently, many hotels referenced the multitude of attractions and facilities available within the hotel or nearby to attract the occasional golfer who might also be visiting as part of a family holiday. A 1930s advertisement in

⁹⁴ Prince's Golf Club, *A Celebration of 100 Years* (Whitstable: White Horse Press, 2006), 14

⁹⁵ *Golfing in Southern England and on the Continent*, 1931,

⁹⁶ *Golf*, 24 July 1891

⁹⁷ Hudson, *Golf Tourism*, 3

The Times for Southsea and the Isle of Wight featured an image of hand-luggage including a suitcase, hat-box, tennis racquet and a set of golf clubs (Figure 3.3).



Figure 3.3: Advert for Southsea and the Isle of Wight
(*The Times*, 15 May 1930)

The wording in the accompanying article assured the visitor staying in Southsea a combination of sea, sport, sunshine, serenity, ships, submarines and satisfaction. Specifics included tennis and bowls weeks, flower shows, children's week, a tattoo and navy week. Those travelling over to the Isle of Wight were promised over twenty resorts, historical spots, delightful walks and a host of sporting opportunities, including nine golf courses. Within this feature were details of several hotels in Southsea and on the island. The Royal Pier Hotel, Southsea announced that it was close to Clarence Pier while the Freshwater Bay Hotel listed its six acres of south-facing gardens, two tennis courts and an 18-hole golf course opposite. The Automobile Association (AA) and RAC approved Undercliff Hotel in Niton, proudly publicised as the most southerly hotel on the island, complete with six acres of Winter Gardens and located close to golf. The

telephone number for the hotel was quoted as ‘Niton 3’⁹⁸, suggesting serenity indeed for holiday-makers who wanted a peaceful environment to enjoy and relax in after their game of holiday golf.⁹⁹

3.7 Conclusion

For the seaside resort towns, the economic benefits to be gained from the influx of golfing tourists were significant, and many enablers provided the catalysts for these financial gains. Still, principally it was led by the railway companies and the resort hotels which were occasionally dual-owned but, even if independent, strategically worked together to enable the aspiring golfing tourist to realise their leisure demands.

Although railways had been in existence in Britain since the middle decades of the nineteenth century, their spread to the furthest and less accessible regions of the country coincided with the significant rise in popularity of golf in England, particularly amongst the wealthier classes who lived in and around London. The railway companies who were in keen competition with each other for passengers aggressively developed new routes and services to allow the smooth, comfortable and frequent travel to the coastal resorts, and thus access to the rapidly expanding number of golf courses located there. Post-World War One, the emergence of the privately-owned motor-cars provided an additional transport alternative to deliver the eager golf tourists to the South Coast golf courses. This was in tandem with the railway network, travelling through the region and onto ferries, also provided by Southern Railways, to sail to the smaller British Isles and Continental Europe, as the golf boom spread overseas, as part of one homogeneous golfing holiday experience. If these were the external transport drivers and influences behind the development of golf tourism, then the hotel owners were the local stimuli. They accomplished this by building new premises or placing carefully worded promotions in various media outlets that highlighted the hotels’ convenient proximity,

⁹⁸ In the 1930s before direct dialling became possible, manual telephone exchanges were necessary. Telephone numbers were pre-fixed with Area Codes corresponding to the place where people lived and connection was made by an operator who would insert a plug into the appropriate jack and say, ‘Number please?’ before connecting the call. Fewer people were on the phone so fewer numbers were needed.

⁹⁹ *The Times*, 15 May 1930

and emphasised the hotels' features, to persuade the golfing tourist to stay there in comfort during the duration of their visit.

The nature and focus of these visits varied, some were commercially organised, many were ventures arranged by private individuals. In contrast, other golfers visited the resorts to play competitively in the multitude of competitions that were staged through the golfing season. Golfing holidays also varied in their duration, as witnessed by the variety of offers available: day excursions, weekend breaks, extended periods and even out of season winter-golf weekends particularly prevalent at the milder South Coast resorts, especially championed by Bournemouth. These were particularly important as they differentiated the town from other golfing-destinations and helped to extend the season, realising welcome winter revenue for the railways and the town's clubs, hotels and other tourist serving establishments. If this study was a current examination, more statistical information would be included detailing the number of visitors, identifying specific types of golfer keen or casual, understanding where they travelled from and the average length of stay. However, today's metric fixation which has become an obsession, to assess and measure all manner of institutions and businesses, was not so prevalent pre-war and so insufficient surviving material for the itemisation of visitors is available for this form of analysis.¹⁰⁰

There is evidence that golf tourism did make the game more accessible, physically and socially for the masses, by breaking down some of the existing barriers. However, it was still wealthy individuals and those with new money who enjoyed a noteworthy place in the popularisation of newer pursuits, including golf, particularly those travelling to France or accessing their golf by motor-car as both choices were still beyond the economic reach of the majority of the population. The monetary outlay is also evidenced in the wording and inferences made in the marketing material and newspaper articles identified within this chapter. However, the increases in the number of days holidays available and the cheaper second or third class railway transport did permit the professional and middle-classes access to the seaside where they on certain

¹⁰⁰ Jerry. Z. Muller, *The Tyranny of Metrics* (Princeton University Press, 2018),13

courses could experience a day's golf with more relaxed access requirements and lower green fees. The thesis' next chapter will expand on this marketing theme and will further demonstrate that this growing socio-economic group, together with women, were positively encouraged to play golf as evidenced by the images and detail of the promotional advertising material produced. Indeed, the next chapter will develop how the enablers identified in this chapter used different forms of motivators to drive the development of golf tourism.

Chapter 4

The Promotion of South Coast Golf Tourism in Marketing and the Media.

4. The Promotion of South Coast Golf Tourism in Marketing and the Media.

The relationship between tourism and media is vital and complex. Tourism is highly dependent on media reporting because the vast majority of travel decisions are made by people who have never seen the destination first hand for themselves.¹

4.1 Introduction

It is now necessary to consider two aspects of promoting or motivating the desire for golf tourism. The first step is to corroborate the literature in the previous chapter and demonstrate how the various enablers; resorts, railways and hotels, produced specific marketing material to nurture the demand for golf tourism. The second part of the chapter not only shows how golf tourism was featured in several different forms of the media, but also demonstrates how golf was more universally promoted, which helped to normalise the activity through what was effectively subliminal marketing.

Initially, a range of the different types of golf tourism marketing are considered which include not only written material, but also the graphic imagery from the 1920s and 1930s, employed to promote golf tourism for the mutual advantage of the various stakeholders that sought to benefit from increased levels of golf tourism. Investigation of pertinent promotional material explores the adverts that were produced by the seaside resorts which appeared in town guides, in attempts to promote awareness of and then increase participation in holiday golf. Also included is a review of how, in the 1930s, short promotional films were used by resorts to promote themselves and their amenities. This shows how the promotion of golf was recognised as a motivator within the resorts' marketing strategies. Equally important is how the railway companies contributed to this narrative, with their special offers for golfers, the use of golfing related railway posters and the publication of specific golfing guides. Shin's work on the marketing strategies of Britain's railways was employed to analyse the use of this material.² Finally in this opening section, the thesis outlines what marketing material was used by

¹ S. Praveen Kumar, 'Role of Media in the Promotion of Tourism Industry in India', *Global Review of Research in Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Management* 1, no. 3 (2014): 186-192

² Hiroki Shin, 'Marketing strategy in Britain's mainline railways 1923-38' *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 9, no. 4, (2017): 425-450.

the hotels located in the resorts to attract golfers, keen or casual, to visit and enjoy the golfing facilities on offer. From all of these varied sources, attempts have been made to uncover to whom this marketing material was aimed, which market segments, and therefore provide some clear distinctions into the different types and class of resorts that Durie and Huggins suggest existed.³

At this juncture it would be appropriate to consider how another motivator, the media, aided in the promotional mix. Themes include how it reported on golf and golf tourism through stories in national and local newspapers, and how features in golfing periodicals highlighted the role clubs, courses and events played as golfing holiday destinations. A discussion will also be developed on what manner the emergent use of radio and newsreels, as methods of communication, increased public awareness of golf and golfing holiday opportunities. Supplementary to the contribution made by the news media is an account of how postcards and cigarette cards further increased both the awareness of and the desire to participate in golf tourism. Rakić and Chambers, Huggins and O'Mahony and Cole and Durack have argued that there is a growing recognition and value in using visual methods in tourism and humanities research, and their studies have been applied to provide insights into the publicity campaigns employed. These forms of image-based marketing material all re-enforced the acceptance of golf tourism as normal and inviting, but different from every day or routine life and activities.⁴ Moreover, the presence of golf tourism in these various forms of everyday life and popular entertainment simultaneously reflects, legitimises and then, by-default, promotes the game through this recognition and acceptance.

4.2 How Resorts Promoted Golf Tourism

When choosing a golfing holiday destination, there were a few guiding principles that all visitors needed to consider: location, price, climate, reputation and quality of the course. These principles were complemented by external factors such as ease of access, availability and excellence of accommodation, catering and the variety of other local

³ Durie and Huggins, 'Sport, social tone and the seaside resorts', 173-187

⁴ Tijana Rakić and Donna Chambers, *An Introduction to Visual Research Methods in Tourism*, (London: Routledge, 2012), 4; Huggins and O'Mahony, Prologue: 'Extending Study of the Visual', 1089-1104; Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 21

attractions for après-golf or for any non-golfers that might be accompanying the main party. This is exemplified by three articles that appeared in the *Illustrated London News* between 1914 and 1925. The first, an advertisement, outlined the good train service from London, the normal hotel and boarding rate tariffs, and also noted how there were excellent shopping facilities for the non-golfer, and daily concerts for all visitors to relax and listen to in the Winter Garden from the ‘finest municipal orchestra in Great Britain’ (Figure 4.1).

BOURNEMOUTH
England's Riviera by the Southern Sea
FOR AUTUMN OR WINTER RESIDENCE.

This charming resort amid the pines by the Southern Sea affords perfect conditions for holidays and residence during autumn or winter.
Exceptionally equable climate, maximum sunshine.
Splendid well-sheltered sea front, with new undercliff Drive extending to Boscombe, and overcliff Drives along east and west cliffs.
Delightfully varied scenery, beautifully kept gardens and parks, fine Municipal golf courses.
Daily concerts in Winter Gardens by finest Municipal Orchestra in Great Britain, under Mr. DAN GODFREY, Hon. A.R.A.M.
Hotel and Boarding House tariffs quite normal.
Excellent shopping facilities.

□ □ □

GOOD TRAIN SERVICE FROM LONDON BY L. & S.W.R.
Waterloo to Bournemouth. On weekdays 5.50, 6.10, 8.55, 10.15, 10.35 a.m., 12.30*, 2.0, 2.20, 4.50*, 6.55*, 8.15 and 9.50 p.m. **Period Excursion Tickets** (11/-) issued during October and November. **Cheap Week-End Tickets**, 1st, 24/-; 2nd, 15/-; 3rd, 12/-. **Holiday Season Tickets**, covering Bournemouth, Swanage, Wimborne, and New Forest Districts, issued to holders of such tickets, for week 8/9, two weeks, 14/6, four weeks, 19/9.

THROUGH TRAINS FROM MIDLANDS AND NORTH.
For full details see railway announcements. * Dining Car. † Luncheon Car.

Guides and full particulars concerning Bournemouth from HERBERT ASHLING, Town Clerk.

Figure 4.1: Bournemouth England's Riviera by the Southern Sea
(*Illustrated London News*, 17 October 1914)

What makes this advert even more interesting is that it was dated two months after World War One had commenced; it showed that at that stage in the war there was an attempt to encourage this segmentation of the population to carry on as normal on the home front. The second article, from 1923, was entitled ‘Beautiful Bournemouth’ (Figure 4.2).

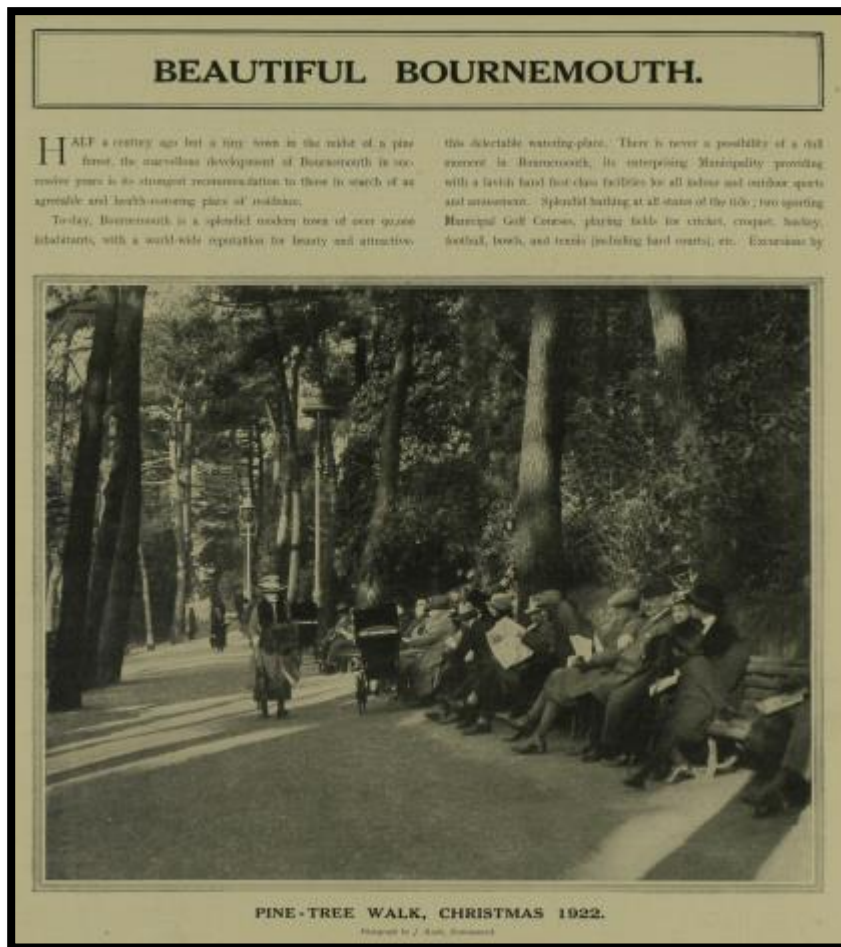


Figure 4.2: Beautiful Bournemouth
 (*London Illustrated News*, 8 December 1923)

The article outlined how the resort was in a fine modern town with a growing worldwide reputation, situated on the protected South Coast, so warm in winter but cool in summer. The municipality had provided the town with lavish first-class facilities for all indoor and outdoor sports and amusements, including two golf courses. Finally, ‘The Seaside Resort among the Pines’ promotes the natural beauty on offer, trees, gardens and sands together with the provision of municipal facilities including the pier, amenities for the hosting of musical entertainment and sports, as well as the golfing opportunities (Figure 4.3). As this advert was published in an April edition, it was

aimed at visitors looking to spend a traditional summer holiday in Bournemouth along with those who might be persuaded by the chance to play golf while visiting the area.⁵

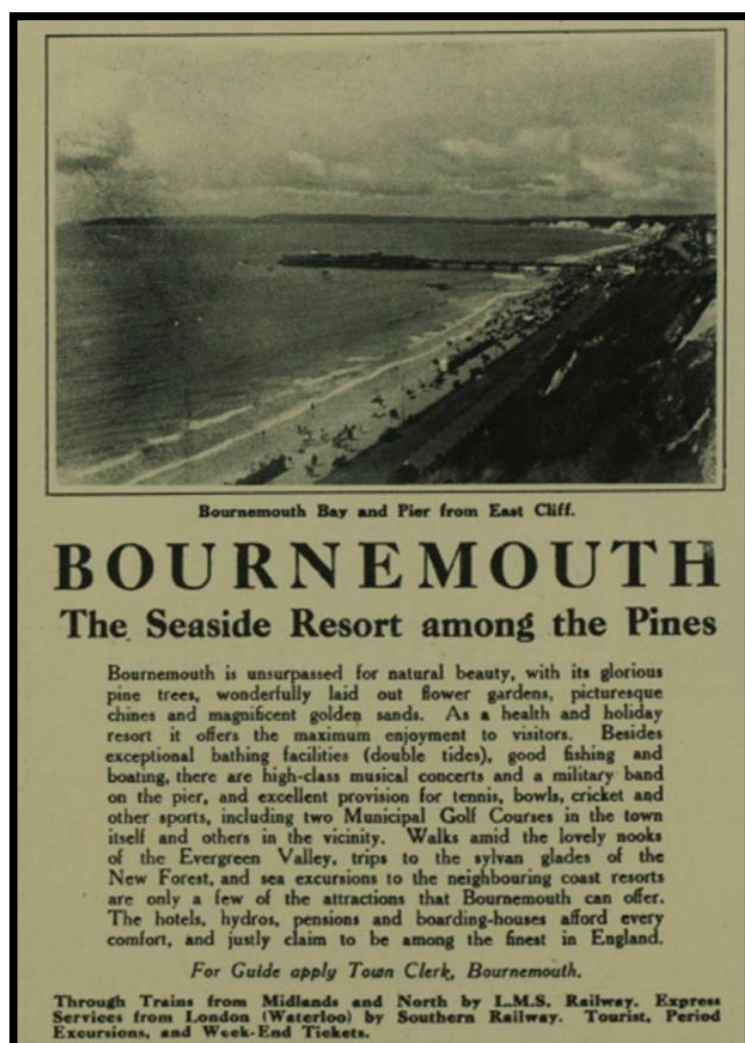


Figure 4.3: The Seaside Resort among the Pines.

(Illustrated London News, 25 April 1925)

Thus the promotion of Bournemouth seems to be consistent with other research which found how towns benefited from and exploited golf to lever additional business.

Anderson and Swinglehurst have highlighted how resorts began to cater for sports-loving holidaymakers, and from the late 1880s guide books increasingly referred to the

⁵ *Illustrate London News*, 17 October, 1914, 8 December 1923 and 25 April 1925.

many excellent local facilities for golf.⁶ Worthing's 1929 town guide perfectly illustrates this with a description of the course and clubhouse by the renowned golf correspondent Bernard Darwin, who described it as 'charming in nature.' The course's accessibility is featured with a note that, 'access is via bus to the gates.'⁷ While there is confirmation that members of other clubs can be admitted on payment, there was not a wholly open to all policy as visitors who were not a member of different clubs required an introduction from a Worthing member. However, the final line which advertised the annual competition and the £126 prize-money would undoubtedly have attracted golfers from outside the town and the county to visit the club. By way of contrast, the feature for Littlehampton GC in the town's 1939 guide was significantly more hospitable to visitors. It offered, 'a welcome to all golfers, assuring excellent conditions and a good holiday.' Temporary membership was available and included a range of fees that aimed to offer the holidaying golfer an extended opportunity to play the Littlehampton links with deals listed as at 20s. for one week, 30s. for two or 40s. for four weeks.⁸

As the marketing industry developed, resorts began to use more modern methods to promote themselves. In the 1930s, a silent British Pathé travelogue for Bournemouth featured several evocative images to encourage the would-be tourist to the town. These included railway stations, the Bournemouth Belle express-train, scenic landscapes, the piers, beaches, promenades, parks and gardens and, significantly, images of the town's two municipal golf courses, complete with emphasis that professional tuition was offered at both clubs. Similarly, another Pathé clip from 1939 is titled, Church on Golf Course, and this features the course at St. Enodoc, Cornwall. Uniquely the course includes a church located in the middle of the course, requiring worshippers to cross the course to access it as no tracks or paths exist. The main focus of the short film is the church, but the inclusion of the golf course would have encouraged the curious golfer to consider a visit to St. Enodoc.⁹ These clips or cinemazines produced by British Pathé were shown as cinema newsreels across Britain. As Huggins and O'Mahony suggest, archive film material helps recall 'the spirit of a past age' and these two clips indicate

⁶ Anderson and Swinglehurst, *The Victorian and Edwardian Seaside*, 109

⁷ 1929 Worthing Town Guide

⁸ 1939 Littlehampton Official Guide

⁹ Church on Golf Course, (1939) [British Pathé] FILM ID:1268.18

that golf, as a holiday activity, was a significant attraction for enhancing the visitor experience for those heading to Bournemouth or Cornwall.¹⁰

Resorts adopted what modern marketers call the AIDA principle (awareness, interest, desire and action), which was originally developed by E. St. Elmo Lewis, to translate their marketing strategies into achieving positive outcomes.¹¹ This tool looks to inform, then instil positive feelings towards the subject of the relevant advertisement or promotion in preference to any competition before, hopefully, persuading the consumer to act and make a purchase.¹² Seaside resorts looking to attract new visitors were therefore required to follow these principles; competition for the golf tourist increased as the golfing boom created new clubs in more locations along the South Coast.

4.3 How the Railways Promoted Golf Tourism

The previous chapter has established that the railways were noteworthy in the development of golf tourism. It was not until the end of the Victorian period however that the railway companies started to widely promote their diverse range of services on offer: the destinations, the hotels and, in some cases, the facilities at the end of the journey.¹³ Some attempts at publicity were poor and could only be described as basic, with forms of simple handbills and notices being commonplace. While they were easy to produce by allowing specific details to be added to standardised templates to promote special events, they frequently contained uninspiring lines of text, lacked originality or imagery and only served to give an untidy appearance to the station buildings.¹⁴ In later years, handbills or Special Traffic Notices (STNs) were frequently used by railway companies to describe any unusual movements of trains. The STNs mention things like horse race meetings and other special events, including golf.¹⁵ The standard and professionalism of the marketing material slowly began to improve after the turn of the

¹⁰ Huggins and O'Mahony, Prologue: 'Extending Study of the Visual', 1089-1104.

¹¹ Elias St. Elmo Lewis, 'Advertising Department: Catch-Line and Argument,' *The Book-Keeper* vol. 15, (1903): 124.

¹² Paul Blakey, *Sport Marketing* (Exeter: Learning Matters, 2011), 99

¹³ Jack Simmons, 'Railways, Hotels, and Tourism', 201-222.

¹⁴ Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 23

¹⁵ Tony Hillman, Bluebell Railway Museum, Email correspondence (23 September 2018)

century, when the companies began to set up marketing departments and to produce short brochures detailing the places of interest served by their networks.¹⁶ A specimen of these improved leaflets was produced by the L&SWR and was succinctly titled *Golf links reached by L&SWR*. It included a comprehensive list of over one hundred golf links, the closest station for the golf tourist to use, a map of the network and an indication of cheap fares from London to a range of ‘Health and Pleasure Resorts from Devon to Hampshire’ and across to the Isle of Wight. Interestingly, the image on the front cover featured a young lady playing golf on what was a links course with the sea pictured in the background, thereby confirming that opposed to conservative gender norms, female golfers were being targeted before 1922 (Figure 4.4).¹⁷



Figure 4.4: L&SWR Golf Links Leaflet
(National Railway Museum, Leaflet 1998-9853)

In the 1920s and 1930s, the railway companies were engaged in fierce competition, but Southern Railway’s publicity in the immediate post-war period was far from commendable. However, this changed in 1924 when the company’s publicity section was centralised and their work became more imaginative.¹⁸ Some of the first railway

¹⁶ Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 7

¹⁷ The L&SWR were amalgamated with other companies into the Southern Railway in 1923.

¹⁸ Shin, ‘Marketing strategy in Britain’s mainline railways’, 425-450.

marketing posters were inadequate; they often included too many images with poor use of the supporting text, meaning they were difficult to read. The company adopted advances in printing technology which made marketing material cheaper to produce, to rectify this inadequacy. Together with the increased use of colour in lithography, the technology made their posters more attractive, and they began to produce a range of promotional material specifically catering for different markets, including the golfing tourist. These advances included the creation of iconic railway posters, which looked to inspire holidaymakers to patronise their networks with eye-catching images of the resorts. They included images of the scenery and attractions available to the visitors by train, complemented by depictions of people enjoying themselves in these exotic destinations, in contrast to the other mundane and dull towns and cities. Of the known 11,000 inter-war year railway posters that were produced, over fifty were of these were signifying golf.¹⁹ Harrington identifies that the examination of inter-war years' railway publicity provides us with some better understanding of their socio-cultural meanings, particularly given the importance of rail travel during that period.²⁰ When evaluating the reason for the use of specific images and messages, Harrington argues that the railway companies recognised that this format could be used in a more nuanced way. With the growing adoption of paid holiday agreements and the increased popularity of holidays with an emphasis on outdoor exercise and recreation, holiday traffic increased.²¹ The posters addressed the well-defined markets. This hypothesis can be tested by analysing the posters' content, with posters frequently appearing to be advertising outdoor leisure pursuits, highlighting a middle-class target market.²² This view is shared by Huggins and O'Mahony, that sport posters with their attention-grabbing pictures have been frequently been used as a communication medium.²³

¹⁹ Railway posters and the game of golf, *Through the Green*, December 2010

²⁰ Ralph Harrington, 'Beyond the bathing belle: Images of women in inter-war railway publicity', *The Journal of Transport History* 25, no.1 (2004): 22-44.

²¹ Harrington, 'Beyond the bathing belle', 22-44

²² D. C. H. Watts, 'Evaluating British railway poster advertising: The London & North Eastern Railway between the wars' *The Journal of Transport History* 25, no. 2 (2004); 23-48.

²³ Huggins and O'Mahony, Prologue: 'Extending Study of the Visual', 1089-1104.

The Southern Railway utilised posters attracting golfing travellers to destinations right across the South Coast including, but not limited to, Bournemouth, Hastings, Littlestone, Rye, Sandwich, and Seaford, as illustrated by (Figure 4.5) below.²⁴

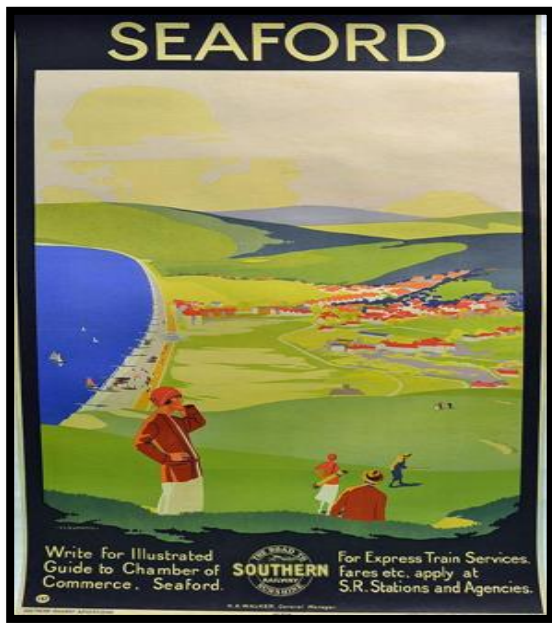


Figure 4.5: Southern Railway Seaford Poster
(Fred Taylor Vintage British Railway Posters)

The intention of the frequent use of images of women on posters was twofold: a clear and deliberate attempt to attract this segment of the market and also to suggest that men might meet women golfers on the links. The Golfing Girl was an invention of the Caledonian Railway, but it was later taken up by the English railway companies including Southern Railways (Figure 4.6).

²⁴ Railway posters and the game of golf, *Through the Green*, December 2010



Figure 4.6: Golfing Girl Southern Railway
www.Flickr.com

Indeed a casual observer might suggest that only women played golf, such was the prominence of the poster imaging.²⁵ The stereotypical portrayal of women in marketing has often been described as powerless and exploited, as they are used to sell the products and services. Alternatively, the image of an attractive younger woman represented freedom and opportunity. This latter strategy had a great deal of synergy with what was known as the Gibson Girls (Figure 4.7).



Figure 4.7: Gibson Girls
 (Gourley, *Gibson Girls and Suffragists* 2008)

²⁵ Railway posters and the game of golf, *Through the Green*, December 2010

A Gibson Girl was the personification of the feminine ideal of physical attractiveness, as created by the American artist Charles Dana Gibson during the period immediately before World War One in the United States and Canada. They represented a new woman who was considered to be free-spirited, emboldened, forging her new independent identity and with time to challenge traditional female roles through undertaking new interests for women, including the playing of golf. Gibson Girls appeared in magazines and invaded popular culture with their image featuring heavily on merchandising. Gourley suggests this made women want to be like them, whereas men admired them and found them irresistible; this combination was perfect for marketing purposes.²⁶ In effect, this was an attempt to use and objectify media images of women to also inspire men to participate in golf. In Britain this use of women in posters was particularly relevant for the inter-war years, when more women were becoming consumers as a result of their greater role in the workforce, their increased disposable income and a greater level of liberalism towards their participation in sport. They were also starting to have a greater say in the decision-making process. In purely aesthetic terms, women's clothing was often more colourful and so more striking. Still, the depiction of women in activities and settings was important and a targeted approach to the marketing of golf tourism.²⁷

By the 1930s, the use of a single dominant image had emerged making comprehension of the message, at a glance, easier. An early critic, Thomas Russell, noted that, 'railway advertising featuring a locomotive belonged to the generation of our grandfathers and modern advertising should focus on not the product, but the service it gives'.²⁸ Shin and Divall have focused on the switch to the increased use of Britain's natural landscape, and these posters transformed the impact and quality of the promotional material as they were drawn by many of the country's finest artists of the period. There was less of a concern with the peculiar quality of the place than with the activities one could enjoy at the destination. Middle-class sport in general, and golf in particular, were frequently the

²⁶ Catherine Gourley, *Gibson Girls and Suffragists: Perceptions of Women from 1900 to 1918* (Minneapolis: Twenty-First Century Books, 2008), 29-31

²⁷ Harrington, 'Beyond the bathing belle', 22-44

²⁸ Thomas Russell, *Picturing the product* (Advertising World, 1924), 550

subject of these posters.²⁹ After their slow start, the Southern Railway moved to the forefront of well-printed posters by well-known artists and literature by renowned authors. Denby-Marshall suggests that their posters might not have been as artistic as other lines. However, he concedes that they were second to none in terms of salesmanship promoting the multiple South Coast attractions that were accessible from their network.³⁰ This assumed level of artistic quality was challenged by Cole and Durack who proposed the Southern Railway developed a new approach in the 1920s, based on the imaginative use of colour and the move away from cluttered images to one central theme.

The poster for Swanage in Dorset is an excellent illustration of this artistic quality with a simple image of the beautiful landscape and, in psychological marketing terms, stimulating the consumer to pay attention and not be distracted by chaotic images (Figure 4.8).³¹

²⁹ Hiroki Shin and Colin Divall, 'Cultures of speed and conservative modernity: representations of speed in Britain's railway marketing', in *Trains, modernity and cultural production: riding the rails*, ed. B. Fraser and S. Spalding (Lenham: Lexington Books, 2011) 3–26.

³⁰ Denby-Marshall, *A History of Southern Railway*, 68

³¹ Catherine Jansson-Boyd, *Consumer Psychology* (Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education, 2010), 49

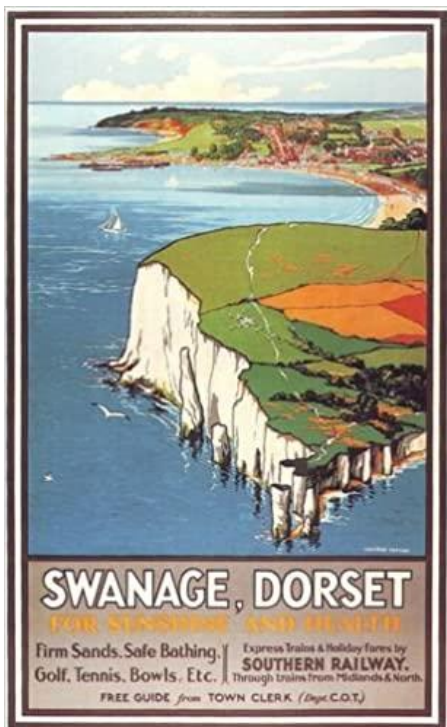


Figure 4.8: Southern Railway Poster, Swanage Dorset
www.ukrailwayana.com

The overhead view immediately draws the focus of attention of the viewer to many of the resort's natural features. Colour is also essential in attracting the consumer's attention, and basic colours can act as a stimulus rather than a distraction.³² The Swanage image uses this theory with the blue sea and sky, fluffy white clouds and cliffs, rolling green hills, and the yellow sandy beach. According to Berns, Cohen and Mintun, this powerful marketing tool would appeal to a potential urban-based tourist as a novel contrast to their grey and built-up everyday environment.³³ It supports Cole and Durack's view who also agreed with Denby-Marshall that a key element of Southern's strategy was to encourage Londoners to visit the countryside and resorts and not just to target their advertising at their regular commuters.³⁴ As the consumers were subconsciously searching for information when scanning posters, the main title that identifies the destination and the list of activities available for the visitor was important.

³² Jansson-Boyd, *Consumer Psychology*, 50

³³ Gregory Berns, Jonathan Cohen, & Mark Mintun, 'Brain regions responsive to novelty in the absence of awareness', *Science* 276, (1997):1272-1275.

³⁴ Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 8-12

The tag-line, 'For Sunshine and Health' is significant too, as it reinforced the positive messages that a holiday in such a lovely environment would be good for prospective visitors. In practical terms for the consumer and critical for Southern Railway's business, the availability of express, through, no changes required, holiday trains is promoted to demonstrate how easy the journey will be when using the railway. The list of activities will have personal relevance to the latent golf tourist with the inclusion of golf amongst the list, meeting their specific objective for travel.³⁵ The poster depicting the golfers playing at Seaford (Figure 4.5) is even more direct, providing a visual image that golf can be enjoyed there. This reflects elements of social categorisation where humans look for similarities between themselves, what they want and what they see.³⁶ The golfing tourist effectively begins to visualise themselves playing golf at Seaford if they act accordingly, and this is known in marketing theory as a self-fulfilling prophecy.³⁷

Southern also paid close attention to promoting its continental links that were reachable via its ferry services.³⁸ The company owned a fleet of ships that sailed to the Isle of Wight and the Continent. Southern for the Continent was used as the most popular slogan, exploiting its proximity to the north coast of France and the Netherlands (Figure 4.9).³⁹

³⁵ Jansson-Boyd, *Consumer Psychology*, 51

³⁶ Jansson-Boyd, *Consumer Psychology*, 56

³⁷ Mikki Hebl and Eden King, 'You are what you wear: An interactive demonstration of the self-fulfilling prophecy', *Teaching of Psychology* 3, (2004):260 – 262.

³⁸ Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 8-12

³⁹ Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 24



Figure 4.9: Southern for the Continent Poster

(Science & Society Picture Library Prints)

The railway companies were influenced by the London Underground, who in 1906 had employed an artist named Frank Pick. Pick pioneered the use of poster advertising to improve the company's public image. The posters were so successful and of such quality that the Underground was accepted as a key patron of the arts.⁴⁰ However, many of the artists who subsequently produced posters for the railway companies were at the time embarrassed about having to create commercial art and signed their posters with pseudonyms.⁴¹ Nevertheless, today, their work is respected and recognised as capturing the spirit and character of British life in the inter-war period.

Complementing the posters was a further marketing tool with the production of illustrated (guide) books; these were in many ways an upgrade of the L&SWR leaflet. These books were frequently written by some of the leading sports and travel writers of the day and were explicitly aimed at clearly defined markets.⁴² In 1921, the North British Railway published its *Golfers' and Anglers' Guide*, a 68-page booklet that

⁴⁰ Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 8

⁴¹ Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 154

⁴² Simmons, 'Railways, Hotels and Tourism', 217; Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 17; Huggins and Tolson, *The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain*, 112; Cole and Durack, *Railway Posters*, 6-7; Watts, 'Evaluating British railway poster advertising', 23-48

contained a brief description of the golf clubs and the best fishing accessible from its network. The Southern Railway produced similar books reflecting its geographic location and natural sporting activities with titles included *Fishing in the South* and *Yachting on the Sunshine Coast*. They also produced a pair of books *Some Friendly Fairways* and *Golf in the South*, both edited by E.P. Leigh-Bennett, a magazine journalist responsible for writing numerous travel guides in this period. According to his obituary in *The Times*, Ernest Pendarves Leigh-Bennett (1882-1937) was a freelance journalist, ‘without equal in his chosen field...capable of turning everyday actions into pure word poetry.’ The obituary not only notes that his major work was for Southern Railway, but also that he was a frequent writer in the *Bystander* and other magazines, on travel and sport, particularly golf, at which he was more than averagely good at himself.⁴³ *Some Friendly Fairways* specifically claimed not to be a Golfing Handbook or Guidebook but a series of delightful impressions of many golf courses in the south.⁴⁴ They were complete with illustrations and contained a series of descriptions of well and lesser-known golf courses served by the Southern Railway. The book’s introduction did proceed to challenge the reader: ‘to try his hand on these friendly fairways’, but suggested that any golfer who resisted, ‘was surely passed his zenith’.⁴⁵

Despite Leigh-Bennett’s claim, *Golf in the South* does read like a handbook with 167 pages divided into two parts. The first is descriptive and is further sub-divided into a review of some of the notable courses located in each of the nine counties reached by the Southern Railway plus, significantly, a tenth section named ‘Based on Bournemouth’ reflecting the prominence of the town for golf tourism. Leigh-Bennett describes Bournemouth as, ‘a par excellent place to stay’ as a resort to suit all tastes, including golfers who were well served with two municipal courses and three star private courses all within a few miles of the town centre. The former two, he contends, are, ‘well-kept and will spoil any golfer, resident or visitor, who plays them.’ Whereas the latter trio, he suggests are ‘three of the most prosperous [clubs] in the south of

⁴³ *The Times*, 6 July 1937.

⁴⁴ Leigh-Bennett, *Some Friendly Fairways*, 7

⁴⁵ Leigh-Bennett, *Some Friendly Fairways*, 7

England.’ This affluence he argues is positive proof that the clubs are giving the members and visitors exactly what they want. These statements demonstrate how the golfing visitor was encouraged and welcomed at all of the resort’s courses and reflects the class and quality that Bournemouth represented for the discerning golf tourist even during the economically difficult decade of the 1930s, that Leigh-Bennett says were ‘days of dearth’.⁴⁶

The courses in the Championship Corner of Kent are naturally featured, with a recommendation to base one’s stay at the South Eastern Hotel in Deal, but so is North Foreland GC. Located on the north coast of Kent, Leigh-Bennett suggests that the course attracts golfing enthusiasts staying at Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs. As opposed to those travelling with golf as their primary intention, here we see prospects for the more casual holiday golfer looking for an activity to undertake while away. Sussex’s collection includes Rye a place where the author suggests, ‘[he] should like to end his golfing days’, and that ‘Rye is great golf.’ Bexhill’s challenge he adds is that there are three beguiling courses to choose and confuse the residents and visitors when selecting a day’s golf. Worthing is described as, ‘a gay little Sussex town, with two courses that give you a day of golfing joy that take £2,000 a year in green [visitor] fees.’ Finally, Brighton provided ‘the whole gamut of golfing emotions...with six courses...with very moderate green fees.’ Interestingly, *Golf in the South* did not think visitors went to Brighton primarily for quality golf, unlike those who went to Deal. Yet, the golfer would still experience excitement and plenty of choices.

Golfers travelling to Southampton in Hampshire were advised to stay at the South Western Hotel and recommended to play Stoneham GC, a course where ‘visiting Londoners would enjoy a high quality of turf, if not the tenacious gorse’. Hayling GC, also in Hampshire, was seen as ‘seaside golf of the first order’ and Rowlands Castle GC was described as very pleasant for visitors. Finally, Garden Isle Golf was how Leigh-Bennett described opportunities on the Isle of Wight. The uniqueness of courses was highlighted with The Needles GC perched on the hogs-back of the chalk down with water on either side of the course. Also the Royal Isle of Wight, Bembridge on its spit

⁴⁶ *Golf in the South*, 64

of land with lovely seaside turf was according to Leigh-Bennett, ‘one of the best nine-hole courses outside of Scotland’.⁴⁷ This part of *Golf in the South* was full of references to the availability of opportunities for holidaying golfers; comforts the towns offered the visitor were complemented by informative, enticing, and sometimes honest appraisals of what challenges the various clubs provided. Also, as one would expect for a publication sponsored by the railway, it highlighted the convenient presence of two Railway Company-owned hotels.

The second part of the publication listed, in tabular format, all 232 courses with a range of necessary information that enabled golfing tourists to understand and select the destinations that met their requirements. The specific course information comprised of: the course length, bogey score, visitor fees payable, the rules for ladies playing, if Sunday play could be had and if on-course accommodation in a Dormy House was available for visitors. The latter four were critical factors for the different types of visitors to help them to assess and to maximise their golfing holiday options. To conclude the table, non-course information incorporated the club’s telephone number, details on local hotels and the name of and distance to the nearest railway station. This inclusion was wholly designed to inform further and simplify the holiday decision-making process for potential golf tourists looking to visit the South Coast.

For those who were motivated to take up this challenge there was Southern’s sister publication, *Golfing in Southern England and on the Continent*, which was available free of charge and produced through the 1920s and early 1930s.⁴⁸ While emphasising that congested city-courses made it difficult for the weekend golfer, it promoted some wonderful courses that were within easy reach of London, where visitors were always welcome. The 1926 edition ran to eighty pages, whereas by 1931 it had expanded to one hundred and seventy, with the addition of an extensive section on the continental courses that were conveniently accessible via the railway company’s network and then its ferry services. Alternatively, for the slightly less ambitious golfer, it highlighted their

⁴⁷ *Golf in the South*, 82

⁴⁸ It’s Quicker by Rail!, Promotional booklets and pamphlets for golfers, *Through The Green*, March 2011

regular motor-car ferry service between the mainland and the Isle of Wight. The listings and descriptions of the courses were comprehensive, clearly written by a golfer for golfers, replete with every conceivable detail that a visitor would need to know for their golfing holiday. Interspersed within the pages of the golfing glossary were adverts for the enablers of a golfing holiday. The speed and quality of the frequent, corridor express trains to a host of potential seaside resort destinations were publicised. Equally, notable were the pages of advertisements that were taken out by hotel owners listing their establishment's qualities and proximity to the resort courses.⁴⁹ It can thus be suggested that without the railway's invention, the development of holiday golf in the south of England would have been significantly slower to develop. Many courses and towns would have missed out on a vital boost in revenue, having been denied easy access to this particular clientele.

An interesting addendum to the review of the 1931 edition was the inclusion of material encouraging golfers to consider a permanent relocation outside of London. Under the heading, *Southern Homes for City Men*, it promoted an alternative lifestyle that offered, 'a very convenient train for businessmen.' This suggested relocation was focused explicitly en route to Haywards Heath, Brighton and Worthing; towns that would be served by the new electrified extension of the Southern Railway in 1933. Further pages in the guide carried information on housing, lighting, soil, local rates, schools, train services, season ticket and prices in an attempt to tempt the city-dwellers to move outside of the capital.⁵⁰ This appears to recognise that this particular market was already mobile and might have been open-minded and affluent enough, as golfers would have been, to consider moving to the country or seaside and becoming part of the commuter class. Economically this would also have been a significant benefit for Southern Railway, as it would have transformed the golfer from being an occasional traveller for golf tourism ventures to becoming a regular commuter. This is a fascinating social science and demographic consequence of the links between golf and the railways that has not previously been considered. These guides characterised how the railways recognised the regional demand for golf, and how promoting the sport within these

⁴⁹ *Golfing in Southern England and on the Continent*, 1926 and 1931

⁵⁰ *Golfing in Southern England and on the Continent*, 1931

guides would be financially advantageous to them as the leading provider of accessible transport to the courses. Locating the railway's inter-war marketing in relation to other industries reveals the relative degree of development in railway marketing. The gas industry provides a comparable situation as both were experiencing competition from newcomers: the gas industry from electricity, and the railways needing to compete with the motor-car.

Watts observes that modern marketing techniques are often said to have begun in the 1920s and therefore it is reasonable to evaluate the material with current criteria. However, he suggests that there is no one commonly accepted technique for assessing art and design.⁵¹ One method which can be applied is Barthes' view that consumption in a capitalist system is driven by uncalculated desires, rather than calculating needs. He adds that a promotional image helps to create these desires and blunts the buyer's calculating consciousness. This position arguably reduces the buyer to a passive and manipulated individual. The contrary view is that advertising appeals to the calculating consciousness.⁵² Although Barthes was referring to fashion, it can equally be applied to marketing and the railway's extensive use of poster art to promote golf tourism. Certainly, Shin argues that the railway companies of the inter-war period can be regarded as sufficiently marketing conscious organisations, producing highly sophisticated commercial propaganda.⁵³

4.4 How Hotels Promoted Golf Tourism

It has been established that resort hotels were very keen to promote themselves to these inbound golf tourists, either within specialist golfing literature or separate publications. A key feature was the illustration of how close they were to the golf course, even if frequently this was a gross exaggeration. Additionally marketing tactics were used to promote reduced rates for golfers whilst also highlighting the quality of the hotel, its features and services. These three components are classic marketing theory using the

⁵¹ Watts, 'Evaluating British railway poster advertising', 23-48

⁵² Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System* (University of California Press, 1990), xi-xii.

⁵³ Shin, 'Marketing strategy in Britain's mainline railways', 425-450.

Marketing Mix elements of Place, Price and Product in the promotion.⁵⁴ All the leading hotels ensured that their advertising material followed these guidelines and positioned their particulars in a range of the most appropriate newspapers and magazines to maximise awareness of their offer. The popular periodical *Golf Illustrated* incorporated a regular feature, Leading Hotels for Golfers, which listed brief particulars and contact details for hotels across Britain (Figure 4.10).

LEADING HOTELS FOR GOLFERS.

BURNHAM, Somerset.—For First-class Furnished and Unfurnished Houses near the celebrated Ladies and Gentlemen Links. Apply—FARMER & STILLER, Auctioneers and Estate Agents, Burnham, Somerset.

BUSHEY, HERTS.—"The Mill." Overlooking Bushey Hall Golf Course. Charming residential Hotel situated in magnificent park of 50 acres, 18 miles from London, London or City; 120 sitting and bed-rooms; dining, smoking and billiard rooms; library and cycle stable; Turkish, swimming and other baths; special and fine for children; swimming pool. Apply to the Manager, Telephone: "Belmore, Watford." Telephone: No. 13 Watford.

CANARY ISLANDS. Santa Catalina Hotel, Las Palmas.—The finest climate in the world; finest Golf Links in the Canary Islands; within ten minutes from Hotel; modern hotels, excellent cuisine, music. Particulars apply to THE CANARY ISLANDS CO., Limited, 5, Lancaster Place, W.1, London, E.C.

CHURCH STREETON (Sheffields) "The Hotel."—Five minutes from station; situated at the base of the Sandstone Hills 30 feet above sea-level; frequent bus service to Sheffield and Sheffield Railway; within short distance of Golf Links.—Trade Managers, 11, Church Streeton, Sheffield.

COLWYN BAY, Rhossili-Sea. Rhos Abbey Hotel is complete with every comfort for Golfers and families. The Hotel occupies historic and Irish House are close to, and beautifully situated along the coast.—Full details of Golf Links and Hotel Terms from SHEFFIELD, Telephone: 40 Colwyn Bay.

CORNWALL, North Wales: Moria Boarding House and Private Hotel, directly adjoining Links of the Carnarvonshire Golf Club; good riding and lawn tennis; fine water course; comfortable rooms; excellent cuisine, swimming pool; bath, hot and cold; extensive terms from 3s. per day, 22 1/2s. per week; winter, from 10s. 6d. per day; highest references.—Proprietors, Mrs. & H. HUGHES, North Wales.

CRUDEN BAY HOTEL and Golf Course.—See Great North of Scotland Railway Company's advertisement, page 61.

CRUDEN BAY, Port Erroll, Aberdeenshire.—"Kilmarlock Arms"—adjoining Cruden Bay Golf Course, excellent links. Excellent bathing, swimming, fishing. Every comfort, bath, hot and cold. Terms moderate, special boarding terms for golfers, October 1st till June 31st. Postal and Telegram office in hotel. Telephone: CRUDENBAY, IVAN ROSE.

DOLECOED HOTEL, Llanwrtyd-Well, Wales. Sublime and sublime spot. Sporting eight-hole Golf Course, with grand panoramic views of the picturesque scenery of the Breconshire and present London Waterworks; finest views of adjacent hills in our hotel; excellent parties, pleasant, and well appointed.

DEAL ROYAL FAMILY HOTEL.—Stay one or two weeks, splendid lawns overlooking with sitting rooms, billiard, refreshment, and furnished; bar, barbers, coffee room, billiards. Perfect ventilation. Nearest hotel to Golf Links. Special Terms for Golfers. Proprietors, Mrs. Hardley, Telephone: No. 9.

DEAL: Golf Villas, Sandown Road.—Overlooking Golf Links and Sea. The oldest established Golfers Boarding House in Deal. Sanitation perfect; refreshment throughout; bath, hot and cold; bicycle house; tennis and croquet lawn; excellent cuisine. Highest references.—For terms apply to Proprietors, N. R. HAY, DEAL.

DEGANWY CASTLE HOTEL, near Llandudno.—Close to Carnarvonshire and within a mile of the North Wales Golf Links. Beautifully situated on the mouth of the river Conway, directly opposite the castle. Comfortable, home-like hotel, tennis courts, billiards, billiard room, cinema, permanent residents on very moderate terms.—Mrs. BETHES, Proprietress.

FRESHWATER BAY, Isle of Wight: Mavelock House.—New Sea and Golf Links. Complete house for golfers. Terms moderate. Address: PROPRIETRESS, Mavelock House, Freshwater Bay, Isle of Wight.

GREAT YARMOUTH, QUEEN'S HOTEL, Marine Parade.—Grand Position in the center of the Marine Parade, facing the Sea and New Bathing Gardens. Unrivalled views. Most advantageously situated for Golfers; nearest hotel to the Links. Extensively furnished. Fitted with all modern improvements. Perfect sea perfect. Private apartments, coffee and table d'hôte. Bath Room, Ladies' Dressing Room, Smoke, Billiard, newly erected and refitted. Bowling and Tennis. Bath Room, Billiard and Sun Water, direct supply. Over 100 Bed and Sitting Rooms. Excellent Cuisine, Table d'hôte at separate tables. National Telephone: No. 28. Telephone: "Brighton, Queen's, 61, Yarmouth." Special terms for winter season and for Golfers.—J. W. SMITHFIELD, Proprietor.

GULLANE, East Lothian, N.H. Nearest to date New Hotel.—Recently enlarged; Nearest Hotel to First Two and Sixties; Course of six famous Golf Courses, all within five miles; Housekeepers, C.F.A.; Billiard, Drawing, Ladies Rooms; South Sea; Shoreline inclusive terms for Golfers and Families.—J. HOOK, Proprietor.

HYÈRES, South of France: Grand Hotel des Palmiers.—Golf Links Hotel—best Links on the Riviera; tennis court; billiard; bath; music; swimming pool. T. ZICH, Proprietor.

LABRACH, Co. Clare, Ireland: Golf Links Hotel.—Five miles; close to Links the finest in Ireland, overlooking the Atlantic. Full facilities supplied; swimming, tennis, perfect; railway station to gateway; electric light throughout; hot and cold sea and fresh water baths; flag house, motor club and lawnmowers from close by.

LITTLESTONE-ON-SEA, Kent:—"Kilmarlock."—Sea front; three minutes to Links; Golfers and families; well-appointed private suites, with or without swimming, bath, hot and cold, gas, electric, heating, ventilation, special and lawn; tennis and lawn; tennis; billiard and smoking.—Mrs. M. J. JAY.

MACHERHANISH: "Graduate Arms Hotel."—Sea front; close to first two of Golf Links. Terms moderate; special terms from October to February. ALEX. EARL, Proprietor. Telegraphic Address: "The Macherhanish."

MUNERHEAD, Somersetshire: The Beach Hotel.—This Hotel is strictly reserved for ladies and gentlemen; immediately facing the sea, and close to the Golf Links and station; very central for the principal seats of the shires, and has a large and beautiful view of the coast from the tower; post-houses and carriages; good swimming; house boats for hire.—John, Proprietor.

NEWCASTLE, Co. Down:—55 minutes by rail from Belfast. Silver Strand Hotel, owned and managed by the Belfast and County Down Railway Company, immediately adjoining the Links of the County Down Golf Club, 120 lawns, splendid views, famous for the finest golfing in play on the Links on half-days.—Further particulars on application to E. H. BIRD, Manager.

NEWQUAY, CORNWALL: Hotel Victoria.—The only hotel in the United Kingdom with a swimming bath in bathing beach. Handsomely furnished, every comfort. Superior luncheon, drawing, reading, and smoking rooms; two billiard tables; electric light. Good view of the bay and coast from the tower. Special terms for golfers.—Mrs. W. HALL, Manager.

NORTH COAST OF CORNWALL: Rock Hotel, Rock, near Wadebridge.—Facing the sea, close to excellent beaches, bathing clubs, within two minutes' walk of St. Budeaux Golf Links, one of the best in the West of England, 18-hole course. Driving floors. Callers and Special Terms. N. WESTON, Proprietor.

PORTSMOUTH: Northern Counties Hotel.—Owned and managed by the Railway and Northern Counties Railway Company; over 120 lawns; magnificent sea and fresh water baths. Special terms to golfers. Full particulars on application to FRANK COX, Manager.

RHODESBERG, Anglesy, E. & N.W. Main Line, Ty-Cross Station.—Bracing, dry, and temperate climate; no fog or rain. The Golf Course, fine type of smooth Links, 18 holes, sea coast, bath and swimming Hotel, hot and cold, bath and wash, within five minutes of Hotel. Capital Garage; carriage, dock, with fuel and rubber slaking; over 200 acres of highly cultivated farms. Far of Links, some for fishing, some for tennis, and sea fishing, with convenience to and from station (two miles), included in moderate tariff, and plan of Links forwarded on request.—Proprietor, T. J. DODD, 111.

SHERINGHAM: The Grand Hotel.—Facing Sea and Adjoining Golf Links, eighteen holes. New first-class Hotel with accommodation for 100 guests. Increasingly furnished. Hydraulic lift, and all modern improvements. Lowest terms from 50s. per dinner (dinner, breakfast, and evening), Croquet, Lawn Tennis, etc. RILEY, Main Manager.

SOUTH COAST OF DEVON: Thurlestone House, Private Hotel, Thurlestone, near Kingsbridge.—Close to and overlooking sea, fine extensive walk from Golf Links; splendid sea and road views; sea and river fishing; bathing; excellent cuisine. Terms moderate. Proprietress.

TENBY, South Wales: The Coburg Hotel.—First-class Family Hotel, with unrivalled sea view; two minutes' walk from Golf Links; families and gentlemen board on most moderate terms. Particulars to be had on application to Mrs. HUGHES, Proprietress. Also at the Royal Victoria Hotel, Bath.

The Bay Hotel, SEAFORD.—Adjoining Golf Club House. Under New Management. Completely remodelled, decorated and furnished by Maple & Co. The entrance and lounge hall; smoking and billiard rooms; finest cuisine and wines; perfect ventilation; tennis, croquet; special rates for golfers. Telephone: 2 Seaford. Telegraphic Address: "Hedgecock, Seaford."—LUCIA HOLDEN & CO., Proprietors.

The Manor House Hotel, CAISTER-ON-SEA, Great Yarmouth.—Quiet; charmingly situated; private grounds running down to the sea; billiards; terms from 20s. 6d. per day; under the same management as the Sheringham Hotel; superior Golf Course (elevation below, Sheringham Yarmouth Links, within five minutes' walk); terms for week, 2s. 6d. per day, 7s. 6d. for 7, 2s. for 14, and 4s. for 21 consecutive days. Telephone: "Manor, Caister-on-Sea."

The Sheringham Hotel, NORFOLK.—120 rooms; delightfully situated in private grounds; magnificent sea and land views; billiards; terms from 10s. 6d. per day; two minutes from Golf Course—eighteen holes. 47, 57, 67, 123, 133, 143, 153, 163, 173, 183, 193, 203, 213, 223, 233, 243, 253, 263, 273, 283, 293, 303, 313, 323, 333, 343, 353, 363, 373, 383, 393, 403, 413, 423, 433, 443, 453, 463, 473, 483, 493, 503, 513, 523, 533, 543, 553, 563, 573, 583, 593, 603, 613, 623, 633, 643, 653, 663, 673, 683, 693, 703, 713, 723, 733, 743, 753, 763, 773, 783, 793, 803, 813, 823, 833, 843, 853, 863, 873, 883, 893, 903, 913, 923, 933, 943, 953, 963, 973, 983, 993, 1003. Telephone: "Sheringham, Norfolk."

WESTON-SUPER-MARE: The Grand Atlantic Hotel.—Facing the Sea, stands in fine area of ornamental grounds, extensive grounds of sea beach and every necessary appointed town. Hydraulic lift, and all modern improvements. Ten minutes' walk from Railway Station and Golf Links. Particulars apply to manager. Telegraphic address: "Atlantic, W. S. Mare." National Telephone: No. 11.

WESTWARD HO! NORTH DEVON: Royal Hotel.—Under entirely new management. Grandly situated facing the sea. Private Golf Links on Moor Ground, and near North Devon Golf Links, the finest in the United Kingdom. Magnificent Billiard Room. Every comfort for Golfers for Sea-Boarders.—Mrs. GUNNISON, Manageress.

The above Hotels, &c., can all be confidently recommended as providing Comfortable Headquarters at moderate charges for Golfers.

Figure 4.10: Leading Hotels for Golfers (*Golf Illustrated*, 19 January 1900)

⁵⁴ John Beech and Simon Chadwick, *The Marketing of Sport*, (Harlow: Prentice Hall / Financial Times, 2007) 38-40

The page footer carried the endorsement that, ‘the hotels can all be confidently recommended as providing comfortable headquarters at moderate charges for golfers’.⁵⁵ Complementing this collective approach are some specific examples that clearly embody the use of marketing theory. The adverts are for individual hotels along the South Coast; although placed in a range of different publications they were all typically representative of the media that holiday golfers read. For instance, the 1888 *Golfing Annual* included an advertisement for the Royal Spithead Hotel, Bembridge, and included details of its proximity to the Royal Isle of Wight GC (Figure 4.11).



Figure 4.11: Royal Spithead Hotel Bembridge
(RIWGC 1949 Handbook)

The Royal Spithead Hotel was indeed within the proximity of this golf club, but the visitor would need to take a ferry for the short journey across Bembridge Harbour to access the first tee. Nevertheless, to attract interested golfers, it did refer to the frequent train service to the Island’s ferry ports and how during the summer months there was even a special steamboat service from Portsmouth and Southsea to Bembridge. The advert was aimed at enticing the affluent golfer with mention of first-class wines and

⁵⁵ *Golf*, 19 January 1900

cuisine which was available at the hotel.⁵⁶ The same publication informed readers that, ‘Excellent accommodation at a very moderate cost can be obtained at the Station Hotel close to the course [Littlestone GC]’.⁵⁷ These reflect Walton’s observations that by the late 1890s visitors insisted on opulent resort hotels with access to golf courses and found entrepreneurs willing to provide and promote this combination of facilities for them.⁵⁸

A later advert, which appeared in a 1930s copy of the Southampton City guidebook, was for the Sutherland Hotel and highlighted the golf course being within one mile of the hotel. It was aiming to appeal to wealthy cross-Atlantic travellers who were staying in the city, as it suggested the opportunity for a game of golf before embarking on nearly a week at sea. Despite the presence of the Bell and Guildford Hotels in Sandwich, together with the South Eastern Hotel in Deal, the *1939 Deal and Walmer Official Guide* listed numerous alternative hotels. They pronounced that, ‘The golfer needs no introduction to Deal. Probably outside of Scotland, the home of golf, there is no happier hunting ground for him. Within six miles there are three championship courses.’ These hotels included the Royal, that was advertised as an AA, 3-star hotel and ‘a wonderful centre for golfers and anglers’ and the Clarendon, marketed as being, ‘within easy reach of four famous golf courses and offered special terms to golfers, anglers and commercials.’ A further four more hotels were listed on subsequent pages, all referencing in their particulars to the proximity of local golf links. This categorically supports and shows the recognition by the local hotelier industry that golf tourism provided a significant market share of the business in Deal.⁵⁹ Averby explains how grand hotels dominated Britain’s seaside resorts with bold, large-scale buildings, often magnificent examples of the most fashionable architectural style of the time.⁶⁰ *Golf in the South* identified that Bournemouth possessed a plethora of hotels, to suit all tastes, de-luxe and simple, with fast and frequent trains to London.⁶¹ Two of these de-luxe

⁵⁶ *1888/89 Golfing Annual*, 82

⁵⁷ *1888/89 Golfing Annual*, 95

⁵⁸ Walton, *The English Seaside Resort*, 40

⁵⁹ Deal and Walmer-The Historic Holiday Resort, *Official Guide*, 1939

⁶⁰ Karen Averby, *The Seaside Hotel* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2018), 64

⁶¹ *Golf in the South*, 64

establishments included the Bournemouth Grand Hotel and the Glenroy Hall Hotel (Figure 4.12).



Figure 4.12: Grand Hotel Bournemouth
(Bournemouth Town Guide 1908)

The former was promoted as a large building with two hundred rooms that served meals in a closed veranda overlooking the gardens, complete with its hall suitable for balls and banquets and critically, being located close to five golf courses. In competition with the Grand was the Glenroy and this establishment boasted one hundred modern rooms, an electric lift to all floors, catering and service of the highest standard, gas or electric fires, hot and cold running water and conveyance to and from Meyrick and Queens Park golf links with special inclusive rates at 12*s.* 6*d.* per day or four guineas per week.⁶² Pope reminds us that in the 1920s many first-class hotels lacked what are now considered to

⁶² Bournemouth Town Guide, 1908

be necessary facilities. So the inclusion of this form of detail demonstrated a competitive advantage over some of its rival establishments.⁶³

Overall, these cases support the view that the hotels situated within the seaside resort towns where golf courses were available, or where there was a constant flow of affluent visitors, were very keen to capitalise on this market. They recognised that they were a lucrative market segment to target.

4.5 How the Written Press Reported on Golf Tourism on the South Coast

This chapter now considers another significant aspect of how the public were exposed to golf tourism through the extended golf media. The following examples of motivators were designed to portray, legitimise and then by-default further encourage golf tourism on the South Coast. The sports columns of the national newspapers, including *The Times*, visibly played a critical role in sports reporting. Yet, despite the extensive coverage in the generalist newspapers, this subculture's demand for sporting news was so great that by 1890 it had spawned two specialist sporting papers, *Sporting Life* and *The Sportsman*, to compliment the daily newspapers.

One of the most prominently featured sports in the printed media was golf, with events held on courses right along the South Coast from Bournemouth to Hastings and St. Leonards regularly featured in the golf reports of *The Times* before World War One.⁶⁴ A page perfectly illustrates this in *The Times* from 1913 with the headline 'Golf Easter Meetings.' It included detailed reports from thirteen club competitions including events at Hythe, Deal and Sandwich and brief reports from twenty-nine other clubs. The reports appeared alongside accounts of professional matches featuring the Open Champions, Vardon, Braid, Ray and Duncan, played on links of Cooden Beach GC.⁶⁵ A pertinent illustration of a popular newsworthy event held annually at Rye GC in Kent is the President's Putter which is contested between the ex-Blues of Oxford and Cambridge. The final of the 1924 competition was contested between the famous amateur and golf writer Bernard Darwin and a Mr Bristowe. *The Times* described

⁶³ Pope, 'Railway companies and Resort Hotels', 62-73

⁶⁴ Durie & Huggins, 'Sport, social tone and the seaside resorts', 173-187

⁶⁵ *The Times*, 24 March 1913

Darwin as ‘one of the most enigmatic golfers’ and true to this analysis, after a poor start, he privileged 2&1.⁶⁶ This was a time when household names contested the Putter and the reports of the competition would have inspired the public to follow their endeavours and visit the links at Rye.

In addition to reporting news, the use of advertising became popular from this period onwards, as companies and destinations understood the potential to make the increasingly affluent middle classes aware of their products and services. An advert in *The Times* promoted Southsea, on the silvery Solent, as an ideal winter resort and included golfing as one of the many attractions for visitors to enjoy.⁶⁷ *The Sporting Life* ran a column, Golfing Gossip, which in 1912 described the location of Thanet Golf Club as being only a short distance from the popular Kent holiday town of Margate and stated that its characteristics left nothing to be desired for the visiting golfer.⁶⁸ Similarly, in 1914 *The Sportsman* under its ‘Golf Notes and News’ section championed the bold enterprise of Bournemouth in setting the example for English towns in providing public greens (a municipal golf course) in 1894 at a time when there was little golf, south of the Tweed. The section went on to explain how the risk paid-off and how it had done much for Bournemouth in attracting golfers to the town and generating around £600 annually for the Corporation.⁶⁹ These two articles were in effect adverts for the two towns’ golf tourism potential by highlighting the quality and the popularity of the golf available. Likewise, a 1934 advert in *The Daily Herald* was titled the Conquerors Coast and featured the four Sussex resorts of Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne and Seaford. The whole page was dedicated to British holiday destinations with this being the first, the largest and most prominent advert. Under the list of visitor attractions were the golf courses at Bexhill and Seaford but interestingly not at Eastbourne.⁷⁰ It would be interesting to confirm whether or not this reflects *The Daily Herald*’s left-leaning and more working-class readership in excluding the more elitist Royal Eastbourne GC from

⁶⁶ *The Times*, 14 January 1924

⁶⁷ *The Times*, 25 September 1916

⁶⁸ *Sporting Life*, 15 August 1912

⁶⁹ *The Sportsman*, 10 August 1914

⁷⁰ *The Daily Herald*, 9 June 1934

the list of holiday golf destinations. Finally, in 1937 *The Daily Herald* carried an advert on its sports pages, suggesting Bournemouth 'For the Perfect Winter Holiday' and listed amongst a long list of attractions there were several golf courses.⁷¹ The positioning of this advert where sports' enthusiasts would be reading was another illustration of astute marketing to maximise awareness of the resort's winter golfing offer for tourists.

However, as golf became established, the middle-classes demanded specialist annual and weekly papers, which revealed that the game was a popular feature of communities. One periodical entitled *Golf* (1890-1900) included a regular feature, Golfing Notes, which was a Question & Answer (Q&A) section and under this the editor gave information to correspondents on all matters of interest to golfers. Replies were furnished on all points connected with travel, sport and residence. A typical example of a golf tourism-related enquiry is from June 1900:

Q. Can you recommend me a good place for a holiday in August, must be really good golf, with an open to visitors meeting during one of the weeks?

A. Littlehampton ought to suit you. There is an Open Meeting on the 6th and 7th August.⁷²

Of course newspapers did perform another vital role in the development and promotion of tournament golf, most notably *The Daily Mail*. Shank and Lyberger have identified this form of a marketing tactic as one that generates awareness of an organisation's products or services. It is one of the fundamental objectives of sponsorship through establishing relationship marketing through developing on-going relationships with customers.⁷³ The specific investment in sponsoring sport has proven to be more effective than other forms of advertising as sport is so high profile and popular that consumers tend to recall the advertisers' names better when sponsorship is involved.⁷⁴ Nonetheless, it was also important in raising both awareness and the profile of golf in general amongst the mass readership, and would have encouraged greater participation

⁷¹ *The Daily Herald*, 13 December 1937

⁷² *Golf*, 29 June 1900

⁷³ Matthew Shank and Mark Lyberger, *Sports marketing: a strategic perspective* (London: Routledge, 2015) 448

⁷⁴ Beech and Chadwick, *The Marketing of Sport*, 275

in the game including a desire to visit the South Coast golf courses where the events were staged, either to play or to spectate.

The sponsorship commenced in 1919 when the newspaper provided £500 for the staging of the St. Andrews Tournament.⁷⁵ It was played amongst the sixty leading professionals and has been dubbed ‘the Victory Open’ as the Open Championship was not held in that year.⁷⁶ The event was a success and became an annual event from 1920 as *The Daily Mail* Tournament played at different venues around Britain and continued until after World War Two. This included events held at three South Coast venues: Royal Cinque Ports, (Deal) in 1924, Bramshott (New Forest) in 1936 as well as Queens Park (Bournemouth) in 1939 as the newspaper recognised the popularity of golf in the region. Amongst the determinants of the demand for sports participation, role models in sports have been extensively examined, and research undertaken by Mutter and Pawlowski has shown that a motivational effect of professional sports on sport participation exists.⁷⁷ The three events held in 1924, 1936 and 1939 would, therefore, have assisted the advancement of participatory golf tourism on the South Coast.

4.6 Radio Makes Itself Heard

Early accounts of golf on the radio and the South Coast golf scene were quickly connected. In 1924 just two years after the British Broadcasting Company was formed, two of the first few radio treatments of the game on historical record were broadcast from Bournemouth. The first golf talk in 1923 was presented by the golf international and writer CB Macfarlane, and it was entitled *Some Golf Hints for the Holidays* which demonstrated that there was a demand for this topic amongst the listeners.⁷⁸ This was followed in 1924 by two *Radio Times* articles from Bournemouth that were described as a pair of regional programmes that were broadcasted on golf. Firstly, in May, HF

⁷⁵ *The Times*, 31 May 1919

⁷⁶ Richard Holt, Peter Lewis and Wray Vamplew, *The PGA 1901-2001 – One hundred years of service to golf* (Worcestershire: Grant Books, 2002), 72

⁷⁷ Felix Mutter and Tim Pawlowski, ‘Role models in sports – Can success in professional sports increase the demand for amateur sport participation?’, *Sport Management Review* 17, no.3 (2014): 324-336

⁷⁸ A Vision for Sound, *Through the Green*, March 2009.

Johnston, who was listed as the captain of the Meyrick and Queen's Park GC, gave a fifteen-minute *Chat About Golf*, this went out at 7.10 pm, after the News and Weather. The second was aired in August and was delivered by a Captain Rowley, who gave *A Talk to Women on golf*. This programme ran from 3.45 pm until 5.15 pm, but the *Radio Times* shows that it principally featured a range of chamber music by a six-piece band with the golf talk as the closing feature; sadly no individual timings for this feature were shown.⁷⁹ Both programmes were presented from Bournemouth, and this reflects the importance and availability of golf in the town. Both programmes would have helped to promote the golfing opportunities available in the town to those listening and living outside of Bournemouth. The programming is also significant in subtle marketing terms as the former, commencing after the news, would have increased the chances of an audience staying tuned in and then being influenced by the feature and then motivated to visit Bournemouth for golf. The latter, being arranged to follow a selection of chamber music, clearly reflects a segmentation of the population (market) that the schedulers thought would be interested in listening to music and participating in golf.

The initial formation of the British Broadcasting Company had been an entrepreneurial venture by several radio-making companies with the objective to sell more radios by stimulating demand through the broadcast of new programmes.⁸⁰ Initially, the company was not permitted to report on live news events, including sport, for fears that it might negatively impact on newspaper sales, but it could broadcast programmes that talked about it.⁸¹ An outcome of this policy both increased awareness of and popularised the game, for example, when featuring locations like Bournemouth's golf tourism.

A sign of golf tourism becoming more of a part of mainstream was when it was the subject for a light entertainment radio play, with another programme listed in the May 1924 edition of the *Radio Times* entitled, 'A Golf Skit in One Act.' The listing continues, 'The Mason's backroom on the first floor of a seaside hotel; the window looks out on the first tee of the golf course...'.⁸² Once again, this provides evidence that

⁷⁹ *Radio Times*, 19 May 1924, *Radio Times*, 1 August 1924

⁸⁰ Roberts, *The Business of Leisure*, 188

⁸¹ Mike Huggins, 'BBC radio and sport 1922-39', *Contemporary British History* 21, no.4 (2007): 491-515.

⁸² *Radio Times*, 5 May 1924

golf tourism was a topic that the radio producers recognised might be of interest to the listener. The following year the merits of playing golf were the subject of a charity fundraising lecture relayed by the radio from the London School of Economics. The programme featured a heated debate between the ultra right-wing journalist Leo Maxse who claimed that golf was only suitable for keeping middle-aged men out of mischief and defending the game, the former Conservative Prime Minister Arthur Balfour, a well-known golf advocate who was known to enjoy a golfing holiday at Rye. Part of Balfour's defence was that golf provided a health satisfaction. He compared the fate of a man taken to the seaside by his wife and children with no way of fulfilling his leisure hours with one who travelled to a healthy climate with beautiful scenery where he could participate in a game that would exercise all his skills.⁸³ This was a clear vote for the virtues of golf tourism, if not for quality family time while on holiday, but symptomatic of the family values of the period. In April 1930 Bernard Darwin, presented the fifth instalment of a series called *Holidays at Home and Abroad* and, not surprisingly, Darwin's topic was *A Golfing Holiday*, which he discussed in a programme that lasted for twenty minutes. Once again this would have encouraged the would-be golf tourist, at the start of the main golfing season, to consider venturing away from their home course and playing on one of the many seaside links courses looking to attract the visiting golfer to their town.⁸⁴

However, before this broadcast and following the recommendation of the 1926 Crawford Committee, the company was nationalised in 1927. It became a monopoly and known as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The move was partly because the government was concerned about the power of radio to influence the listener's opinions and so it was safer to be controlled by the state.⁸⁵ The change did permit the new BBC to collect news of events from around the world and to become an official news agency. Specifically, it signalled the way for the BBC to commence live sports broadcasting. Golf, however, proved to be a challenging sport to cover live given that it

⁸³ *Radio Times*, 12 May 1925; Dale Concannon, *Golf Stole My Brain - And Other Strange Golfing Tales* (John Blake Publishing, 2015)

⁸⁴ *Radio Times*, 19 April 1930

⁸⁵ Roberts, *The Business of Leisure*, 189

was played over such a large area. It was not a game of continuous action, unlike football or horse-racing and the game also took place over a long time period compared with most other sports. This made it more technically difficult to cover with the relatively primitive and bulky equipment available in 1927 and less appealing for the radio listener without constant action being described.⁸⁶

While the coverage of golf events on the radio, whether through live accounts or summaries of the day's play, was not explicitly aimed at advertising golf as a holiday activity it would have served to publicise and popularise the game. The programmes would have stealthily encouraged new participants to take up the sport and also existing players to travel to the destinations featured in the broadcasts, including the Open Championship venues in Kent or the welcoming golf-friendly resorts like Bournemouth. In an era when the means of communication was quickly expanding and becoming ever more influential, the news media, golf and the burgeoning golf tourism industry benefited from a close association. There was a clear and obvious virtuous circle. This involved a demand for news stories, an increasing range of sophisticated and professional means to provide them to an audience eager to read and often to participate in golf and golf tourism, which itself was regularly thought to be newsworthy.

4.7 Postcards and Cigarette Cards Providing Indirect Marketing of Golf Tourism

Whilst on holiday, tourists were keen to write home telling friends and family about their experiences; the use of the postcard quickly became a communications revolution. Now they provide a very important role in reconstructing the past, offering a visual dialogue on the relationship between life and sport.⁸⁷ The Post Office first allowed picture postcards within the postal system in 1894 and then in 1902 came the first instance of the divided back, where the address and message appeared.⁸⁸ Postcards were mainly black and white and at the start of World War One, printers saved ink by adding a white border which characterises this era of postcards. As tourism is about images, postcards provide much more detail than just textual records and so they represent

⁸⁶ Huggins, 'BBC radio and sport', 2007

⁸⁷ Huggins and O'Mahony, Prologue: 'Extending Study of the Visual', 1089-1104.

⁸⁸ Julia Gillen, 'Writing Edwardian Postcards', *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 17, no. 4 (2013): 488-521.

legitimate data.⁸⁹ This is true for the current thesis, as many of these postcards depicted golfing imagery; therefore the postcards in themselves were further forms of marketing, as well as being quick, informal and attractive written messages.

An observation of surviving postcards from the period of this study currently appearing for sale on-line reveals that they celebrated both the spectacular and the ordinary. The location of clubs and courses was widespread across the South Coast. All of the famous clubs, for example, Royal St. Georges were featured, but so too were many of the smaller and more obscure clubs, for example, Bembridge along the South Coast. These results reflect a broad acceptance that golf, regardless of the venue, was a relevant topic for the postcard producers and that the clubs were keen to be represented as it provided them with publicity. The most common form of imagery was pictures of the golf course or the clubhouse. These are termed as topographical postcards with scenes and glimpses of social life fundamentally representing popular culture in this bygone era. A series of scenic colour postcards depicting the many golf courses in Bournemouth were produced in the early 1900s by J Welch and Sons, Portsmouth (Figure 4.13).



Figure 4.13: Postcard Meyrick Park Bournemouth
(Peter Fry, BGCS, Private Collection)

With the name of the course and the town prominently printed along the bottom of the postcard below the eye-catching golfing image, they were a simple form of marketing.

⁸⁹ Rakić and Chambers, *An Introduction to Visual Research Methods in Tourism*, 4

Another popular style was the panoramic quartered-card depicting a selection of the resorts tourist amenities. For example, a postcard with the centralised text, ‘Greetings from Folkestone’ incorporated pictures of the golf course, beach, promenade and the boating lake (Figure 4.14).

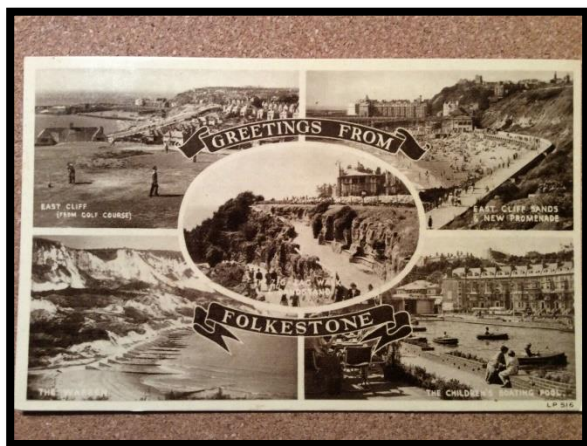


Figure 4.14: Postcard Greeting From Folkestone

(www.dearly.co.uk)

There are similarities between this format and the railway posters in portraying these types of local attractions to market the resorts. Yet it is still crucial that golfing scenes were included and were thought to be vital in attracting tourists. A smaller number of the postcards were portraits or drawings of golfers either posed for the camera or playing golf-shots. These often included pictures of women golfers which were then sold as Glamour Golf but, as with the analysis of posters previously in this chapter, these postcards would have equally appealed to and encouraged men and women to play golf when they were produced. Finally, there were examples of cartoon styled postcards either representative images of golfers or some that contained elements of humour. One of the most famous creators of cartoon-postcards was Donald McGill who produced over 12,000 comical, and for their time risqué, postcards from 1904 until he died in 1962. Many of these also had golf and golfing couples as the subject of their double-entendre humour.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ George Orwell, *The Art of Donald McGill* (London: Secker & Warburg 1941), 99-111.

Postcards were a quick, informal and attractive way of sending a written message back home, from one's holiday, regardless of whether the sender had been partaking in golf or not. Two examples can be seen in (Figures 4.15 and 4.16).



Figure 4.15: Postcard Lyndhurst from Golf Links

(Hampshire Records Office, 115A08/104/16)

The message on this postcard (Figure 4.15), sent to a Mrs Bridges of Worthing in 1910, contained some brief and straightforward pleasantries before adding they had been very busy, too busy to write Mrs Bridges a letter. However, there was no indication that these busy endeavours including the playing of golf, the image of the course appealed to the sender and it also informed Mrs Bridges that golf was available for anyone visiting Lyndhurst. A second example is a simple black and white picture of the 3rd green at Burley Golf Links (Figure 4.16) sent in 1921 from an M. Hodgkiss to their friend, a Mrs Chitty living near Shrewsbury, Shropshire. The message told her that, 'they were going to visit Bournemouth the next day, but the weather was very cold' at the time of their stay.



Figure 4.16: Postcard Burley Golf Links

(Hampshire Records Office, 115A08/30/1)

Again it was not clear if the visit included the playing of golf at Burley or in Bournemouth but still the opportunity one could play golf at Burley had now been publicised. The results of this investigation show that postcards, then a popular means of communication between those on holiday and friends and family at home, frequently featured golfing images. So here there is evidence that postcards aided the promotion of golf and by default golf tourism, even if the sender made no actual reference to their participation in the game.

A similar outcome of increased advertising was achieved when catering for those addicted to smoking by way of the once common cigarette cards. This was a significant method of promotion as smoking was a popular pastime during the inter-war years and so would have been an effective and cost-efficient marketing tool. Cigarettes, not yet seen as the killer, were smoked by heroes in popular fiction of the era.⁹¹ Although the first statistics were not recorded until the 1940s, tobacco industry figures showed that well over fifty per cent of over-16s in the UK were smokers, and amongst men, the core golfing market, this increased to almost two-thirds.⁹² In common with other recreational activities, the tobacco firms frequently used sport to promote their products in the days before the dangers to health from smoking were publicised. Huggins notes how, from the 1880s, cigarette firms would include cigarette cards in packets that featured famous

⁹¹ Eric Burns, *The Smoke of the Gods: A Social History of Tobacco* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), 169; Huggins and O'Mahony, Prologue: 'Extending Study of the Visual', 1089-1104.

⁹² *The Guardian*, 7 October 2014

jockeys and horses and similar tactics were undertaken for golf, with courses and players featuring instead.⁹³ In practical terms, the addition of a piece of card within the packet helped to stiffen the packaging, whereas the cards with images from popular culture, including castles, ships, military themes and sports, became collectable items and effectively helped to sell more cigarettes as customers sought to collect the set. Indeed this addiction to collecting the cards became as addictive as smoking the cigarettes for some.⁹⁴ W.D. & H.O. Wills was one of the first companies in the UK to include advertising cards in their cigarette packets in 1887. In 1934 a humorous set was issued by W. A. & A. C. Churchman under the title *Three Jovial Golfers in Search of the Perfect Course*. The descriptions on these cards were generally light hearted in nature and discussed the plights of participants playing a round of golf. Within the set, specific holes at Royal Cinque Ports GC, Rye GC, Prince's GC and Royal St Georges GC were shown.⁹⁵ Then in 1936, John Player & Sons produced a *Championship Golf Courses* series depicting twenty-five famous British courses. The series included all of The Open Championship venues, including the three from Kent and a selection of courses from around the British Isles with Cooden Beach GC representing the South Coast. On the front of the card was a plan of the links and on the reverse, a potted-history of the course recognising that it is one of the most popular in Sussex located on the seashore beyond Bexhill. For the tourist minded golfer, the location of Cooden Beach station being alongside the course together with the existence of a Dormy House with fourteen bedrooms and five bathrooms adjoining the clubhouse would have encouraged consideration of the course as a golf tourism destination. Further important details were the visitor fees, including seasonal variations, fees for ladies and that Sunday play was allowed. All this text would have helped to inform any potential golf tourist that they could satisfy another of their addictions by acting on this information (Figure 4.17).

⁹³ Mike Huggins, *Horseracing and the British 1919-39* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 55

⁹⁴ John Broom, *A History of Cigarette and Trade Cards* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2018), 18

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 48



Figure 4.17: Cigarette Card Cooden Beach
www.flickr.com

With four out of the twenty-five of the cards representing South Coast courses, it put the region onto the national radar in terms of awareness and was thus another means of marketing its potential for golf tourism.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has identified how the enablers of golf tourism quickly recognised the economic benefits that could be derived from targeting this burgeoning market. Initially, this marketing was undertaken in written form in newspaper reports or simple text adverts, but as the century developed and mainly post World War One the impact of evocative imagery was also understood to be effective. This prompted the commissioning of professionally drawn posters, such as the Southern Railway poster promoting holidays in Swanage and later the use of moving images, the British Pathé film of golf in Bournemouth. All of the interested parties, railways, hotels and resorts, produced robust marketing strategies to reach and appeal to the specific target market or segmentation of the population that were considered to be prospective golf tourists. This involved adopting a hierarchy of effects as advanced by advertising and sales pioneer, E. St. Elmo Lewis.⁹⁶ This four-stage process would initially raise their awareness through a wide variety of eye-catching material. Even the simple mention of golf

⁹⁶ Thomas E Barry, 'The Development of the Hierarchy of Effects: An Historical Perspective,' *Current Issues and Research in Advertising* 10, no,1-2 (1987): 251-295

tourism created a cognitive familiarity, for example, the poster depicting the course at Seaford, which helped to develop the next stage, interest. This was achieved by outlining the array of benefits a golfing holiday could provide: excitement, relaxation, fun, competition, or simply enjoying a new experience. Once the interest was achieved, the marketing aimed to arouse a desire within the target market. This was done by identifying the value that participation would deliver and for some this might have just been greater access to golf that was frequently out of bounds in their typical home environment. Littlehampton's 1939 town guide for visitors exemplifies this announcing that the course was welcome to all golfers. Finally, the marketing was intended to instil action, making it easy to purchase or consume by providing details of the locations, costs, and contact and booking procedures.

The research has also shown that these primary enablers were not isolated in promoting golf tourism. They were aided by several secondary influencers, postcards and tobacco firms, who were quick to capitalise on the popularity of golf to sell their products, but almost as an accidental outcome further helped to create awareness and encourage participation. This principle applied regardless of the size or status of the clubs featured, from the elite Royal St. Georges GC to small clubs like Burley GC in the New Forest. This investigation confirms that there is clear evidence of how different marketing material was aimed at different segments including women, witness the Golfing Girl image used by Southern Railway, the increasing mobile middle-classes in addition to the mainstay target audience, the seasoned gentleman golfer. Huggins and Durie assert that there were different classes of resorts which have in part been justified by the range of supplementary activities and amenities on offer. The grandeur of the hotels described in the marketing material produced for Bournemouth elevated it above what was generally available at its rival resorts.⁹⁷

Jarvie claims that sport was initially marginalised in the respectable media and sporting stories only became more prevalent towards the end of the nineteenth century.⁹⁸ One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that, in general, it seems the

⁹⁷ Durie and Huggins, 'Sport, social tone and the seaside resorts', 173-187

⁹⁸ Grant Jarvie, *Sport, Culture and Society* (London: Routledge, 2007), 135

media had a substantial influence over the audience perception, by informing, influencing and then motivating critical sectors of the public to participate in golfing tourism. How sports events are covered impacts on how the public regard or understand those events, and so the media becomes a powerful influence on sport and society in general.⁹⁹ Sports news in general and for a significant number of the readership, golf, such as the match between four Open Championship winners at Cooden Beach in 1913, was an essential topic for coverage by newspapers. Its inclusion was therefore vital to help sell newspapers and for them to vie with their competitors in circulation battles. This close association with golf was further enhanced when *The Daily Mail* began to sponsor professional events, including one held at Queens Park, Bournemouth in 1939, recognising the mutual benefit that this investment would deliver. Such was the high demand for golfing news that specialist publications emerged and golf was also deemed to be a popular feature in lifestyle magazines for the upper-middle and upper classes. Newspapers and the written media led the way, but from the mid-1920s the emerging phenomenon was radio including features and stories, with Bournemouth highlighted in two of the very first shows in 1924. Then came actual golf reports, as restrictions on live news coverage were relaxed post-1927, which accelerated this motivating process for golf tourism.

Without this broad media coverage and dedicated literature, such as Leigh-Bennett's *Golf in the South*, the development and popularity of golf tourism would almost certainly have been slower. Awareness and hence desire to participate in it would not have been generated to such a high degree. With all of these motivators and influencers driving increased demand for golf tourism, coupled with greater accessibility and affordability, it led to a change in holiday habits.

The contribution made by all forms of golf clubs on the growth and importance of golf tourism must be recognised, but the influence of the private golf clubs must be investigated first as these clubs were significantly more commonplace than municipally-owned courses. Despite some access restrictions, the private clubs significantly added to the attractiveness and opportunity for holiday and weekend golfing visits. The next

⁹⁹ Grant Jarvie, *Sport, Culture and Society* (London: Routledge, 2007), 147

chapter will illustrate, using multiple case studies, how private golf clubs, aided by this increased publicity and through their collective but sometimes very individual approaches, added to the facilitation of golf tourism on the South Coast. This contribution can even be considered to be the birth of golf event tourism for the amateur golfer.

Chapter 5

The Private Golf Clubs' Commercial and Sociological associations with Golf Tourism on the South Coast

5. The Private Golf Clubs' Commercial and Sociological associations with Golf Tourism on the South Coast

'The first thing two Englishmen would do if castaway on a desert island would be to form a club.'¹

The Edwardian golf club is the idea of social capital, a way of conceptualizing the intangible resources of a community, shared social values, and trust that are drawn on in daily life. Social capital can be viewed as involving mutual support and obligations, social cooperation, trust, and of importance to a sporting organization, institutional effectiveness.²

5.1 Introduction

Building on the previous chapters, that considered how the enablers and motivators created the demand for golf tourism, is an examination of the contribution of the largest source of golf courses available for golfing holidays, the Private Members Golf Club. It considers their aims and role in driving golf tourism by identifying two specific avenues: firstly the commercial benefits for the clubs and, secondly, the social changes that clubs through their gradual acceptance of golf tourism helped to deliver. The early part of the chapter shows how the clubs were capitalist enterprises that targeted additional revenue, and as Vamplew suggests, the extra income was certainly most welcome.³ It demonstrates how the private clubs were part of the professional tourist economy, promoting themselves, or in partnership with other clubs and the local authority, to attract golf tourists to play on their links. This positive embracing of visitors has been identified through a range of visitor green fee options that were available: day memberships, weekly or even extended season tickets for those able to spend the duration of the summer on holiday.

The private clubs also organised annual competitions, especially during the peak holiday season, that permitted entries from visitors in addition to the clubs' members.⁴ The motivations for this were mainly financial, attracting extra income, although there were also some social objectives. Long distant, country members, who joined and

¹ Jeff Hill, *Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 130.

² Vamplew, 'Sharing Space', 359–375.

³ Wray Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game: The Socio-Economic Divide at late Victorian and Edwardian Golf Clubs* (Saarbrücken: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, 2017), 23

⁴ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 23

played at the seaside courses as their second club, as weekend tourists, had a significant impact generating additional revenue for some clubs. How important this specific type of golf tourist was and what influence they had on the clubs is described. Finally, in this sub-section, the role of on-site Dormy Houses is highlighted.

A detailed examination of club records for four clubs, Rowlands Castle 1902-1941, Hayling Island 1893-1964, Cooden Beech 1927-37 and Seaford 1938-1939 was carried out, and newspaper accounts (*Isle of Wight County Press*, 1903-1933, *Portsmouth Evening News*, 1891-1937 and *Bexhill Observer* 1925-1928) from over thirty clubs from Kent to Dorset, and across to the Isle of Wight and Jersey were studied. These revealed how at some clubs golf tourism re-enforced social norms, but also how it started to break down the barriers and the associated Victorian values, making golf at the end of the 1930s more accessible. This will be framed in terms of an expansion of opportunities for touring-groups, different classes and women to play on the South Coast links. Women had participated in golf for some decades, but their status and role frequently remained marginalised. Golf clubs had very established subcultures, with the membership of clubs at the foundation of Victorian values of cultural capital, and essential to the bourgeois culture that helped to reaffirm one's middle-class identity.⁵ Consequently, some seaside clubs considered the golfing tourist to be a second-class citizen who was tolerated, but often seen as an unwanted interference, despite the financial dividend. To control the influx of outsiders dominating their courses, restrictions and rules were adopted. This thesis has located a pattern of increased costs, restricted tee-times and even days, particularly the often contentious issue of Sunday play, to regulate when the golf tourists could play and thus to limit the impact on the members.

In contrast, the right sort of visitors, royals and well-known luminaries were welcomed, and accounts of their visits were frequently featured in the newspapers. The need for added income is seen with clubs targeting different markets, with the coincidental and gradual removal of societal barriers. Of specific interest were the relaxation of golf's

⁵ Simon Gunn, *The public culture of the Victorian middle class: Ritual and authority in the English industrial city 1840-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 15; Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England, 1918/1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)

strict rules and policies at dozens of courses to permit wider access to particular segments that were otherwise restricted from the opportunity to play golf as equals. The stringent need for a secretary's letter of introduction or playing as a member's guest was more relaxed at these private seaside golf clubs than at urban courses, allowing the visiting golfer to supplement but not supplant the local members.

By way of illustration, a review of the, perjoratively termed, 'invasion' of these private courses by golf societies who would visit en-masse effectively occupying the course and the clubhouses for the day is documented. These golf societies were more tolerated and seen as another form of club. Typically, they comprised of groups of professional men drawn from the same occupation, but some examples are shown to bring forms of class diversification with societies of footballers and actors amongst those participating. Finally, the chapter considers how women, individually, in groups or playing in tournaments were welcome on the private seaside links.

5.2 How Private Golf Clubs Invented and Profited from Golf Tourism

Vamplew has established that seaside courses were often developed with visitors in mind, specifically those who also played on courses at home.⁶ The private golf clubs both recognised and capitalised on this premise. They were promoting widely in the golfing press with the clear objective of attracting more visitors and their ensuing green fee income.⁷ There was an unambiguous and mutually beneficial relationship between the South Coast's golf clubs and the Southern Railway, as discussed in Chapter Three. This was evident in the case of Seaford, which was described in *Golf in the South* as, 'a splendid district for a summer holiday, and all golfers will feel awfully well here'.⁸ Bournemouth and its private courses were championed as being, 'par excellence, the place to stay. There are three stars, Parkstone, Broadstone and Ferndown and each club gives their members and visitors exactly what they want, and golfers of both sexes are

⁶ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 67

⁷ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 24

⁸ *Golf in the South*, 23

not easily pleased nowadays'.⁹ The periodical *Golf* included as a regular feature 'Golfing Trips' which was aimed at the urban golfer with its enticing visions to tempt them to journey to the seaside, no matter the season. For example, the virtues of a summer golf break in Bexhill-on-Sea were highlighted with, 'in August days, when the town golfer is sighing for a breeze to temper the fierce rays of the sun and speculating as to where to go to find coolness, Bexhill, with its delightful temperature, should prove most attractive'.¹⁰ Supporting the article were more practical details, including the proximity of the club to the station and the anticipated green fees payable by visitors 1s. 6d. per day, 5s a week and 15s a month. The latter two fees were aimed at holiday golfers planning to enjoy an extended stay, rather than at the day-visitor. This form of multiple-fee pricing over longer periods was a recurring feature in much of the golf tourism-focused advertising. Alternatively, the golf links on Hayling Island was suggested to benefit from the Island's genial temperatures in the winter months.¹¹ Meanwhile, Jersey was identified as an 82-mile boat journey from Weymouth, and so any prospective golfer planning to visit the island would have been anticipating an extended holiday. However, after describing Royal Jersey GC as being most picturesquely situated, it was stated that visitors did have to be members of recognised clubs and were required to pay 2s. per day or 7s. 6d. a week, but for £2 they would receive the privilege of playing in club meetings with special prizes for visitors.¹²

At a meeting of the Isle of Wight Golf Union in 1903, the Island was described as 'A Golfer's Paradise'. This claim was based on how:

with a radius of nine miles, there were ten golf clubs to visit and with an eleventh soon expected. Moreover, they offered a variety of play to both visitors and permanent members, and that about 1,200 golfers visited the Island. It was suggested that the number might easily be increased, probably to 2,000 or 3,000 if the exceptional opportunities were more widely known.¹³

A past Secretary wrote a specific example of this golfing paradise of Shanklin and Sandown GC; he recounted that up to World War One there were many visitors to the

⁹ *Golf in the South*, 65

¹⁰ *Golf*, 17 Aug 1900

¹¹ *Golf*, 19 Jan 1900

¹² *Golf*, 9 Nov 1900

¹³ *Isle of Wight County Press*, 5 December 1903

club with families having summer residences in the district and bringing guests for long summer holidays. The green fee was only 2s. 6d. per day and as much as £1,200 was taken in one season demonstrating the volume of visitors in attendance. However, he added that after the war much of what was left of these days of affluence disappeared.¹⁴ Still, in 1926, the *Isle of Wight County Press* found that, ‘golf, by way of its all the year appeal is probably one of the most generally played games on the Island. Despite the great numbers of summer golfing visitors and the hundreds of local island players, the courses can always be found free from congestion.’¹⁵

Not all reviews of the golf on the Isle of Wight were written so positively. Firstly, *Golf Illustrated*’s 1900 account of the links near Ryde, was hardly one to inspire or heighten a visitor’s ambition to play there. It lamented, ‘the golf links...are not as good as one would be led to expect from the size and importance of the town.’¹⁶ Or secondly, Browning’s mixed remarks in the club’s handbook from the 1920s were somewhat discouraging: ‘The Ryde course is not great golf, but for the holiday golfer it can be very good fun.’¹⁷ These remarks might have influenced a belated response by the club in 1933 when the local newspaper noted a £180 investment in the course from the club’s Development Fund had been made to improve the condition of the course. It added that ‘the [improvement] works were rewarded with an increased number of visitors and the money spent on the greens was in the interests of the members and the many people who came to the Island to join them.’¹⁸

These promotions and articles contributed to the increase in visitors and provided the private clubs with a source of additional income. Originally many clubs did not charge guests if they were playing with members. However, over time clubs realised that the extra income was very welcome and amended their policies.¹⁹ The actions of Hayling Island GC illustrate this point. According to the club’s original 1884 rules, members

¹⁴ Cliff Dinham, ‘History,’ *Shanklin & Sandown Golf Club*, <https://www.ssgolfclub.com/clubhouse/history/> (accessed 23 November 2019).

¹⁵ *Isle of Wight County Press*, 11 December 1926

¹⁶ *Golf Illustrated*, 6 April 1900

¹⁷ Ryde Golf Club Handbook 1920

¹⁸ *Isle of Wight County Press*, 5 August 1933

¹⁹ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 23

could introduce a friend to play the links for a period of no longer than one week. However, if the period should be extended, the name of the person must be approved by the Council (Committee) and payment of 5s. per week made.²⁰ This suggests that the first week was free of charge. Some forty years later the club was charging visitors, as now, and members were permitted to introduce one guest that did not reside within fifteen miles of the clubhouse to the privileges of the clubhouse, upon payment of 2s. 6d. per day. The guest's name and address and the name of his introducer were to be entered in the Visitors Book. Furthermore, the guest must be accompanied by, and play with, the introducer.²¹ This revised policy had been in operation for over thirty years, as demonstrated in 1902 by the case of Major Cox regarding the introduction of visitors by him over the Easter period. The club's minutes stated that Major Cox had not accompanied them to the clubhouse as their introducer, as he was ill on the first day of their visit. Minded of this, the Honorary Secretary put them down free for Good Friday, but as they also played Easter Sunday, the Honorary Secretary wrote to Major Cox saying that his friends should pay green monies for that day, whereupon Major Cox wrote back resigning from the club. The Honorary Secretary responded to the Major, pointing out that the rules had been followed and that the Committee regretted that he found it necessary to resign and hoped that he would reconsider his decision.²²

Most seaside clubs charged lower fees than their inland rivals but energetically invited patronage from visitors by offering the range of daily, weekly and even season tickets to substitute for this loss of revenue. The committees often held a more relaxed position on membership and visitors within these seaside clubs, in contrast to the suburban, home clubs, as this chapter will expand upon later.²³ A specific case of an income generation strategy is demonstrated within Browning's 1920s handbook for the Shanklin and Sandown GC. Visitors could be admitted after 48 hours' notice to the Secretary to all privileges of the club, except entering competitions and introducing visitors, on payment of the appropriate green fees. The fees payable by either sex were: 3s. 6d. per day, 15s. a week; £2 for the month, increasing to 5s. per day, £1 a week, £2 10s. for the

²⁰ Jon, *A History of Hayling Golf Club*, 11

²¹ Hayling Island GC minutes, 15 April 1933

²² Hayling Island GC minutes, 19 April 1902

²³ Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 127

month for men; or 3s. 6d. per day, 15s. a week, £2 for the month for ladies during the Easter period and summer months when demand by visiting golfers was at its highest and increased fees could be charged.²⁴ Counterintuitively, it appears that inclement weather had a positive impact on the number of visitors playing at Shanklin and Sandown GC. According to the 1931/32 AGM minutes, ‘the wet summer caused many visitors to spend time on the links which would normally have been spent on, or by, the sea.’ The year’s accounts indicated a welcome increase in green fees enabling the £1,000 mark to be passed, which had not happened since 1924.²⁵ A poster for Ventnor GC shows that visitors were allowed to play on the links, which were situated on the downs, from whence splendid views of the Island were obtained. In a further effort to tempt golfing visitors, the cost of the green fees was shown, and information on accessing the club was included; the charge by omnibus from the station was given as 6d. or it was a 15 minutes’ walk.

The volume of income derived from green fee income was an important factor for private clubs as can be seen from two entries in the Hayling Island GC Committee minutes. In August 1893, the Secretary reported that ‘the club had the sum of £309 11s. 8d. in the bank’.²⁶ Three months later, the Secretary informed the Committee that ‘the green [fee] money from Autumn Meeting 1892 to Autumn Meeting 1893 had amounted to £121 6d’.²⁷ This figure represented just under 40% of the club’s previously reported reserves and showed how beneficial this form of income was for the solvency of clubs. The understandably negative effect of World War One on Rowlands Castle GC’s green fee income can be seen in (Table 5.1); this shows the club’s annual Revenue Account figures across six years.²⁸ It is striking how it declined, but then quickly recovered after the hostilities ceased in November 1918 to levels above the 1914 peace-time figure. The demand from visiting golfers was high after the four years of the conflict which had prevented many from enjoying such frivolous activities as golf.

²⁴ Shanklin & Sandown GC –1920s Handbook

²⁵ Shanklin & Sandown GC, 1931/32 AGM Review

²⁶ Hayling GC Committee minutes, 12 August 1893

²⁷ Hayling GC Committee minutes, 11 November 1893

²⁸ Rowlands Castle GC minutes, 20 March 1915, 25 March 1916, 14 April 1917, 11 May 1918, 12 April 1919, 2 April 1921

Table 5.1: Rowlands Castle Golf Club, Green Free income 1914-1921

Year	Green Fees Income
For year ending 28 February 1914	£146 11s.
For year ending 28 February 1915	£92 2s.
For year ending 29 February 1916	£89
For year ending 28 February 1917	£55 17s.
For year ending 28 February 1918	£29 17s.
For year ending 28 February 1919	£44 10s.
1920	Not Reported
For year ending 28 February 1921	£251 19s. 2d.

The enduring lure of golf is illustrated in the following story that appeared in *The Times* in 1919, just two months after the end of the war:

For many, that winter provided the first opportunity to take a holiday, and despite a spell of bad weather, it did not dissuade the dormant golf enthusiast from visiting the South Coast. Before the war; golfers would naturally include a bag of clubs in their luggage as it would not have been considered a proper break without taking them. However, post the cessation of the hostilities did the zeal for the game remain strong? My query was answered when I encountered a gentleman heading to Eastbourne and despite taking his clubs with him, was unsure and displayed little enthusiasm that he would actually play. The gentleman's transformation upon his return was significant as he talked of nothing but golf, the quickness he had got his game back, the people he had met and had subsequently beaten in a four-ball match. Golf had quickly reclaimed one of its followers, enslaving him again as it had won him in the first place. The four years duration of World War One had little impact on the demand for, and impact of holiday golf.²⁹

Clubs understood the benefit of maximising the opportunities to accommodate visitors, and so specific competitions were organised for them during the summer months,

²⁹ *The Times*, 13 January 1919

particularly at seaside courses.³⁰ This can be seen in courses on the Isle of Wight which appear to have been a popular destination for golfers seeking competition golf while on holiday. In its annual review, *The Isle of Wight County Press* recorded that at the Needles GC competitions were specially arranged for visitors who visit the West Wight in large numbers during the holidays, before adding, ‘1926 had proven to be the second-best in the number of visitors using the Needles Course’.³¹ This influx of visitors was recognised in the Needles Club Official Handbook with a section, ‘Useful Addresses: Accommodation for Visitors’, with several nearby apartments and visitor residences listed.³²

Even in turbulent times, golf tourism to the Isle of Wight remained popular; it was reported how at Shanklin and Sandown GC the entries for the competitions had been larger than ever before, despite the strikes³³ and other troubles which had afflicted seaside golf. Green fees showed an increase from 1925 to 1926.³⁴ Two accounts from the 1930s highlight regular success by visitors competing in the Shanklin and Sandown Easter meeting. Firstly, in 1936 it was noted that LK Lucas of Gidea Park GC (Romford) and JFW McClelland of Sandown combined to win the medal foursomes competition.³⁵ Secondly, ‘Visitor with 18-handicap wins at Sandown’ was the headline in *The Portsmouth Evening News* for the 1937 annual three-day Easter meeting at Shanklin and Sandown GC. No home club is mentioned, only the name of Mr Lee, but the success of a visitor was thought to be newsworthy and certainly illustrates that visitors were welcome at this club at a popular holiday resort destination.³⁶ The significance of this bulletin was that the *Portsmouth Evening News* was not an island-based newspaper and suggested a keenness to promote the opportunities and success that visiting golfers could enjoy when visiting the island. Golf was part of Ryde Week too, and it was predicted that:

³⁰ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 23

³¹ *Isle of Wight County Press*, 11 December 1926

³² Needles Golf Club Official Handbook 1926

³³ The 1926 general strike in the United Kingdom was a general strike that lasted nine days, from 3 May 1926 to 12 May 1926

³⁴ *Isle of Wight County Press*, 11 December 1926;

³⁵ *Isle of Wight County Press*, 25 April 1936

³⁶ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 2 April 1937

[the week] should prove very successful for the townspeople and a most enjoyable one for visitors. The number of holidaymakers has greatly increased during the last few days. Visitors who enjoy more strenuous exercise [than Bowls] may take part in the competitions of the Ryde GC, not just during the week but through the month.³⁷

Open golf meetings were also an essential part of the holiday season for Bexhill. In 1928, the town welcomed 250 golfers taking part in the annual competition, and the *raison d'être* for the event was to spread the town's name as far afield as possible. To achieve this aim, notices were placed in the London and Golfing press. They were not only rewarded with players travelling from clubs in the neighbouring counties of Kent, Surrey and Hampshire, but also from London, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and even more distant entrants from Lancashire, Cornwall and even Kobe, in Japan.³⁸ The play at the Bexhill Open Meeting was featured in *The Times*. Although no specific references were made to visiting players, its reporting would have helped to promote the event demonstrating awareness for high profile publicity by the Bexhill officials.³⁹ Previous to this, Bexhill had hosted a dedicated Visitor Cup for non-members; results from 1922 and 1925 reveal players entering from Leicester, Cheltenham and Exeter.⁴⁰ The importance of publicity can further be seen by attempts made by clubs to encourage visitors to enter their competitions. *The Eastbourne Gazette* included a Public Notice aimed at attracting visitors to Eastbourne to enter the open golf meeting that was to be held on 15 and 16 July 1938 on the Royal Eastbourne course.⁴¹ Likewise, Hayling Island advertised that the Houldsworth Challenge Plate was open to all amateurs being members of any recognised golf club. However, entrants from away clubs were requested to send their names, entry money and their home handicap, signed by the Secretary of their home club to the Honorary Secretary. This shows that, bandits,⁴² or cheats were commonplace in the nineteenth century if this level of handicap vetting was required.⁴³ The opportunity for visitors to participate in competitions at Hayling Island GC was further evidenced when it was carried in the club minutes that visitors having

³⁷ *Isle of Wight County Press*, 3 August 1933

³⁸ *Bexhill Observer*, 15 September 1928

³⁹ *The Times*, 15 September 1928

⁴⁰ *Bexhill Observer*, 26 August 1922 and 22 August 1925

⁴¹ *Eastbourne Gazette*, 6 July 1938

⁴² Bandits is the colloquial term for golfers who inflate their handicap to increase their chances of victory.

⁴³ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 13 March 1891

paid green money were to be allowed to compete for the Bogey Prize at the summer meeting.⁴⁴

When identifying the variety of golfers engaging in golf tourism, the long distant country member who enjoyed their holiday golf as members of a second-club must be also be classified as golf tourists. It was a small investment for the players to make, but a good source of income for the clubs. Golf was a sport enjoyed by wealthy and influential people and so seaside clubs attracted and were attractive to gentlemen from London and other inland locations. As Huggins noted, club membership offered enhancement in status and increased cultural capital for the middle classes to demonstrate one's progress up the social ladder as clubs looked to maintain their exclusivity. They were a private habitation for the members where professional men met, socialised and did business together.⁴⁵ Humphreys draws on the work of Bourdieu when highlighting his concept of social and cultural capital. Bourdieu chose to describe social fields, instead of the more popular term of class, where members of these fields gain symbolic capital of prestige and honour through membership of these social networks. Bourdieu expands his argument by suggesting that associating with similar individuals elevates one's cultural capital, and encourages people to invest their free time within these socially compatible groups.⁴⁶ The opportunity to spend time relaxing with friends or colleagues at the seaside while playing golf at their second/holiday golf club fits these views.

It also answers the question of Walsh, in his history of Seaford GC when he asks, 'What is it that attracted those early golfers and their families most of them living near London and travelling down here at weekends or at holiday times?'⁴⁷ The extent of this invasion can be seen from the addresses of the first 800 members that appear in the club's

⁴⁴ Hayling Island GC minutes, 15 December 1900

⁴⁵ Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 100-101

⁴⁶ Claire Humphreys, 'Who Cares Where I Play? Linking Reputation with the Golfing Capital and the Implication for Golf Destinations', *Journal of Sport & Tourism* 16, no.2 (2011): 105-128; Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a theory of practice*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Pierre Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital,' in *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*, ed. J. Richardson (New York: Greenwood, 1986)

⁴⁷ Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club*, 2

Candidates (Membership) Book, across 1887-1905. An analysis shows that many members were resident in London and the Home Counties, and over this period they outnumbered the locals. With regard to their occupations, many were members of distinction: MPs, judges, and merchants from a variety of professions.⁴⁸ Moreover, two examples of the London-centric nature of the early membership can be seen in the locality of the club's initial celebratory and governance gatherings. Firstly, the venue for the inaugural club dinner, held in 1892, was The Savoy, London.⁴⁹ Secondly, after three to four years of the AGMs being held in London, due to the dominance of members from the city, the local membership was unhappy with this arrangement and fourteen wrote in the suggestion book specifically requesting that from 1906 the meetings be held in Seaford.⁵⁰ The immediate response from the Committee was, 'This will be considered.'⁵¹ A more mundane answer to Walsh's question has previously been explored in this thesis: excellent train links from inland urban areas to the coastal town. Specifically, Seaford's convenience and accessibility from London were shown when *Golf* claimed that, 'fast running trains leave Victoria at 9.50 am and reach Seaford nicely within two hours'. It was then emphasised that this swift transfer offered the visiting golfer the choice to take an early lunch and a subsequent round, or if they preferred, a preliminary round and a more substantial meal after.⁵² The same article suggested that it was not just the London golfing visitor that Seaford GC appealed to, with cheap touring tickets bringing Seaford well within reach of the Northern, Midland and Eastern counties.⁵³ Indeed, Walsh himself identified that the railway connection was enhanced when the directors of the LBSCR saw the opportunities of new business from the regular weekend and holiday visits from the capital to Seaford. The club's first rule book included details of the special fares available to club members. Eight-day returns were available at 14s. first-class and 9s. 6d. second-class. Members needing special railway tickets had to apply to the Club Secretary, Mr Reep, who also lived in London.⁵⁴ The ascendancy of London based members was still evident in 1920 as

⁴⁸ Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club*, 10 and 13

⁴⁹ Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club*, 19

⁵⁰ Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club*, 32

⁵¹ Seaford GC Suggestion Book, 9 September 1906

⁵² *Golf*, 7 Dec 1900

⁵³ *Golf*, 7 Dec 1900

⁵⁴ Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club*, 13

shown by an entry in the club's suggestion book: 'steps [should] be taken to ensure that the results of any competition be inserted in the London papers and also *Golf Illustrated* or *Golfing*'. To which the Secretary replied, 'results were always sent as the club still had the active support of many distinguished London residents, who naturally wished to know how they had fared'.⁵⁵

The same rationale aided the development of this particular form of golf tourism at Littlehampton. The direct railway from London to Littlehampton helped to establish the club, bringing the gentry to their seaside holiday houses. Indeed, train journeys were considered part of everyday life and brought golfers from London to play.⁵⁶ As at Seaford, it was not just a golf club just for the people of Littlehampton; it attracted members from across Sussex but also London and other parts of the country.⁵⁷ This is demonstrated when by 1896 there were 135 members of whom thirty-four had London addresses.⁵⁸ Ten years later, this had increased to 250 total members and sixty-six from London (four gave their address as the Stock Exchange), a vicar in York and another member from Wales.⁵⁹ Finally, the international or imperial nature of the membership is illustrated by the 1925 list with members whose home addresses were given as Shanghai, Ceylon, Calcutta and Cairo.⁶⁰ It was not just Seaford GC and Littlehampton GC that attracted country members, with Jon claiming that many members of Hayling Island GC lived away from the local vicinity. With many members living and working in London, the Committee scheduled the competitions around various week-long meetings in the spring, summer, autumn and winter as this allowed greater participation and the details of the meetings were subsequently published in *The Field* and *The Portsmouth News*.⁶¹ We have some idea how these titles were used to promote the club, the standard of completion and importantly how they featured the good weather that players appreciated. According to *The Field*, when the 1885 summer meeting of the

⁵⁵ Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club*, 164

⁵⁶ Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton GC*, 2-3

⁵⁷ Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton GC*, 15

⁵⁸ Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton GC*, 21

⁵⁹ Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton GC*, 28

⁶⁰ Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton GC*, 40

⁶¹ Jon, *A History of Hayling Golf Club*, 84 and 17

Hayling Island GC took place, ‘the weather was all that could be desired’.⁶² Whereas in 1933 *The Portsmouth News* reported, ‘The Men’s Autumn Meeting [enjoyed] excellent weather conditions that favoured the players. There was a good entry for the whole of the events, and a high standard of play was maintained throughout.’⁶³

Kent was also well-known as a holiday destination for Londoners, and the capital’s golfers were not excluded from this trend. The construction of a new course in 1900 at St. Margaret’s, Dover was not only popular with the locals, as *Golf* highlighted, ‘the members’ list contains a considerable proportion of London businessmen – a state of things to be encouraged in every way’.⁶⁴ Similarly, the Herne Bay links were termed to be a nice little course worth the attention of golfers who required ‘something tolerable’ near London. Golf fees were advertised as £2 2s. for Gentlemen but only £1 1s. for London members. This is further evidence of the inducement to attract weekend golfers from the capital, as was the news that ‘special railway fares are granted from London and that there are two good hotels the Dolphin and the Connaught both of which offer special inclusive terms for golfers’.⁶⁵ London’s golfing tourists were thus extended cheap golf, reduced rail fares and hotel accommodation costs; such was the eagerness to attract them to visit the North Kent golf club.

Regardless of type, the golfing tourist spending more than a day away from home required overnight accommodation and the solution for some clubs was to provide this directly by offering club-owned facilities known as Dormy Houses. These were facilities for visitors to stay in and were located on or close to the course. *Golf in the South* identified several courses as having access to Dormy Houses, including Bognor, Ferndown, Cowes, Freshwater, Osborne House, Littlestone, Lymington, Seaford Head and a particularly excellent one at Cooden Beach.⁶⁶ Cooden’s Dormy House was opened in 1913 and was described as ‘a model of comfort’ and offered sixteen bedrooms and six bathrooms. Leigh-Bennett thought, ‘a golfer could consider themselves lucky to be staying in the Dormy’ and elaborated on this further, that once

⁶² *The Field*, 8 August 1885

⁶³ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 3 October 1933

⁶⁴ *Golf*, 31 Aug 1900

⁶⁵ *Golf*, 29 June 1900

⁶⁶ *Golf in the South*, 20

while convalescing in Cooden's Dormy he had no desire to get well and have a reason to leave.⁶⁷ This endorsement demonstrates the quality and range of services and facilities the Dormy House offered. Facing west, it provided an ideal location for a few sundowners after the day's round.⁶⁸ Who could stay in the Dormy House was much debated by the club's Committee and in 1928 it was resolved that rooms were only for the use of visitors paying green fees.⁶⁹ However, this arrangement was only by men, as in the following year, the Committee's views on letting ladies use the Dormy House were discussed. It was resolved that they were not in favour of allowing ladies into the present Dormy House and nor were they in favour of extending the present facility.

In contrast, golf societies were more than welcomed with the Secretary being instructed to offer the Northcliffe GS and the Screen GS rooms in the Dormy House on the occasion of their respective visits in 1931.⁷⁰ The fees and catering arrangements were also a matter of consideration. In 1922 the minutes show that it was the wish of the Committee that the breakfast served in the Dormy House be improved, notably the porridge. It was also recorded that the alternative rate of 17s. 6d. per day inclusive should be quoted, in addition to the 8s. for Bed and Breakfast.⁷¹

At Seaford Head GC the Dormy House remained operational until a purpose-built clubhouse opened and the Dormy House became Seaford Head Country Club Hotel, until demolition and redevelopment with private houses.⁷² It was not until 1958 when the town's other course, Seaford GC, developed their own Dormy House when the rooms on the first floor of the clubhouse were converted into bedrooms for visitors.⁷³ Finally, at Bournemouth, the Dormy Hotel in Ferndown was a luxury 4-star property, which served the adjacent Ferndown GC from 1911; it attracted a host of stars from the world of sport, especially championship golf.⁷⁴ The income from Dormy Houses

⁶⁷ Leigh-Bennett, *Some Friendly Fairways*, 37

⁶⁸ Price, *The Unremitting Challenge*, 37

⁶⁹ Cooden Beach GC minutes, 14 July 1928

⁷⁰ Cooden Beach GC minutes, 14 February 1931

⁷¹ Cooden Beach GC minutes, 7 October 1922

⁷² *Sussex Express*, 10 March 2005

⁷³ Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club*, 56

⁷⁴ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 29 July 2015

represented a large part of the commercialisation of private golf clubs by offering these proto-hotels to the visiting golf tourists as they diversified from only offering golf. The concept of golf clubs investing in accommodation complements the discussion in Chapter Two, where hotels were set up with golf courses. Indeed, just ten miles separated the Dormy House at Littlestone GC and The Imperial at Hythe with its course in the grounds of the hotel.⁷⁵ These two neighbouring examples were effectively doing the same thing, just from opposite perspectives.

5.3 Private Clubs Slowly Adapting to Changing Social Values

Despite a clear and obvious need to encourage visitors to play as individuals, within competitions or to join as long-distance members, private clubs were not always welcome, or clubs so hospitable, particularly when membership was full and the risk of over-crowding arose. Controls and limits were made by the setting of exorbitant charges, restricting the hours available for visitors' tee-times or even constraints on the days when visitors were permitted to play.⁷⁶ Southern Railway's *Golf in the South* analysed 292 golf courses accessible from the rail network and under rules on visitors, a standard policy amongst twenty-eight clubs was, 'visitors must be introduced by a member'.⁷⁷ The enforcement of this policy was a particular concern at Seaford GC in 1938 when twenty members petitioned:

that in future visitors should not be allowed to play on payment of a green fee unless they are members of a recognised golf club or have been personally introduced from a member of this club. At the moment there appears to be nothing to prevent a char-a-bang drawing up at the club and for a party of people to claim their right to play golf on payment of a green fee. Such a party might easily make for the inconvenience and embarrassment of members.⁷⁸

Another illustration of these restrictions can be seen from an account of what visitors would encounter at Sandwich. 'The far-famed links are quite private, and strangers wishing to play must be introduced by a member.'⁷⁹ The same account noted that

⁷⁵ *Golf in the South*, 129

⁷⁶ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 24

⁷⁷ *Golf in the South*, 88-167

⁷⁸ Seaford GC Suggestion Book, 7 April 1938

⁷⁹ *Golf Illustrated*, 16 June 1899

‘Littlestone GC is a private course, which does not specifically lay itself out for visitors so that unless the golfer takes the precaution of being put up by a member, he might find some difficulty in getting to play.’⁸⁰ Slightly less aloof was Prince’s GC: ‘there is a peace and quietness that seems always to overlie the place. True, you have to bring an introduction from a member for permission to play, and so the holiday crowd is unknown’.⁸¹ This trio of Kent courses was more reluctant to receive visitors than others on the South Coast; the by-introduction-only policy supports Vamplew’s findings that several elite clubs placed access, for visitors, in the hands of their members rather than the judgement of other clubs.⁸²

A particular concern was interference by visitors when club competitions were being played. This was exemplified at Hayling Island GC when the Secretary received a complaint regarding visitors playing on the links, before a ladies competition. It was decided that at any future meeting visitors must start half an hour before the time fixed for competitions to start, failing which, then not until all competitors have started.⁸³ An even more draconian stance was taken at Rowlands Castle GC, when it was resolved that, ‘no visitor shall be permitted to play on club-match days and a notice be placed in the pavilion intimating this’.⁸⁴

A further barrier that restricted the weekend only visiting golfer was a challenge from the church and the Sabbatarian movement, led by the Lord’s Day Observance Society (1831) fervently opposing Sunday play. However, golf as a new sport, when played on private land, frequently broke this pattern.⁸⁵ Further analysis has shown that there was not a universal position regarding Sunday play as restrictions were variable. Where play was permitted, a common rule was to play without caddies. In the case of Seaford GC, when formed in 1888, the rule was that, ‘No play shall take place on the links on a Sunday’. However, in 1894 an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) debated the

⁸⁰ *Golf Illustrated*, 16 June 1899

⁸¹ *Golf in the South*, 11

⁸² Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 27

⁸³ Hayling Island GC Committee minutes, 11 April 1894

⁸⁴ Rowlands Castle GC minutes, 2 April 1906

⁸⁵ Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 73

question, and it was carried by fifty-five votes to thirty to play on Sundays, but not with caddies. This progressive development was emphasised in *Golf*, but while Sunday play was allowed, it confirmed that the clubhouse was closed and no caddies were officially provided.⁸⁶ This development, however, did result in the course becoming more inviting to visiting golfers spending their weekend at Seaford GC and then from 1907 the rules were relaxed to allow the use of caddies: ‘to enhance the visitor experience further’.⁸⁷ Another notable illustration from the same period, but with the opposite outcome, was the EGM at Hayling Island GC to consider the question of play on Sundays and the employment or non-employment of caddies on Sundays. An additional point to be settled was whether visitors coming to play on a Sunday were to pay green monies or not and, if so, to whom they should pay it? As being a Sunday, there was no one available to collect the fees. It was recorded that the requisition was not in order as it had been ruled that caddies are not to be employed on Sunday; nothing about the rules on visitors and their fees was recorded.⁸⁸

The benefits of allowing Sunday play at Littlehampton GC links were announced in 1891 when the merits were noted, specifically that the links were little known and never crowded. Equally crucial for the metropolitan reader, and latent golfing visitor, was ‘that Sunday play is included as no objection is taken to play on that day’.⁸⁹ This was an important consideration for the golfer looking to spend the weekend playing at Littlehampton GC as they could be assured of maximising their time and justifying their travelling costs in the knowledge that two days of golf would be available. This message was reinforced a few years later with a similar message, ‘Sunday play is allowed at Littlehampton, so that the busy professional city businessman who can only spare two or three days at a time, will find Littlehampton as well suited for him’.⁹⁰ The strongest illustration of the demand for seaside Sunday golf was written in 1901 in the *Brighton Gazette*:

⁸⁶ *Golf*, 18 August 1899

⁸⁷ Walsh, *Seaford Golf Club*, 20

⁸⁸ Hayling Island GC minutes, 16 November 1901

⁸⁹ *Golf*, 6 Nov 1891

⁹⁰ *Golf*, 13 October 1899

Not few enthusiasts travel down [especially] on a Sunday to enjoy a round on the Dyke links. They are to be seen at the railway station in the familiar costume with their tools. Brighton in this respect is no exception to many other places where the links are in full swing on the Sabbath. The fact is, golfing on the grounds near London is discouraged on Sunday, and that is why its admirers travel out of town.⁹¹

Irrespective of the day of the week, the right kind of visitor was always welcome and the playing of golf by high profile golfing tourists was deemed newsworthy. This further assisted the promotion of the clubs as subsequently visitors were attracted to indulge in conspicuous consumption, or more genuine reasons for testing their golfing skills, on the links where the rich and famous had played. This is supported by Humphreys who discussed the experience of players interacting with golfing places (clubs) and the associations that the golfer could access, adding to their golfing capital, which they could draw upon to enhance their status.⁹² The Hayling Island links were the centre of national attention when in 1935 *The Daily Telegraph* reported that the Prince of Wales played a game with his brother the Duke of Kent during the Review of the Fleet. The weather was so hot the Duke of Kent played without his shirt only to find that it was missing upon his return to the clubhouse. The round was supposed to be informal, but a number of the local holidaymakers were present naturally recognised the Princes and were quick to cheer them.⁹³ While not possessing the status of royalty, wealth and all the trappings were to be found at Prince's GC in the 1920s and 1930s, as the golf club enjoyed its fair-share of well-connected members. The Astors, Slazengers, Moore-Brabazons, Dudley-Wards, Playfairs, Hambros, and du Mauriers all had family holiday homes in the area and spent time on the course.⁹⁴ The Isle of Wight County Press noted that the island clubs also attracted dignitaries: 'amongst the large number of visitors who played on the links of the Shanklin and Sandown GC were Lord Ebbisham and his son, who with Lady Ebbisham were staying at Seaview'.⁹⁵ High society in the inter-war years still presented a picture of metropolitan glamour and maintained the legitimacy of social esteem for the general public. This position was fuelled by Britain's

⁹¹ *Brighton Gazette*, 3 October 1901

⁹² Humphreys, 'Who Cares Where I Play?' 105–128.

⁹³ Jon, *A History of Hayling Golf Club*, 106; *The Daily Telegraph*, 16 July 1935

⁹⁴ Prince's Golf Club: *A Celebration of 100 Years*, 19

⁹⁵ *Isle of Wight Country Press*, 18 April 1936

powerful and sophisticated press that gave immense publicity to those in society, presenting them as key social influencers of fashion and sport.⁹⁶

The opportunities, but also the potentially conflicting priorities for the golfer visiting the seaside while primarily on the family holiday, were often highlighted. Apparently, there was no better place than Littlestone for a family man who was a keen golfer. 'For here his non-golfing people have the charming little seaside place to enjoy while he is battling, with a quietened conscience, on the course. All over Littlestone men have built or leased caches, to which they come at weekends throughout the year.'⁹⁷ Likewise, at Hythe GC, 'after 4 pm the green fee was only half a crown for the poor man who has stayed dutifully with his family throughout the summer day, but loves a round after tea...this little act makes a holiday golf course popular'.⁹⁸ This recipe for domestic disputes was also common at Littlehampton where *Golf in the South* suggested, 'Women complain bitterly of their men-folk here during summer holidays that they never see them because of the golf, which is painful, but at the same time a high testimonial for the course, if not the culprits.'⁹⁹ These all suggest the hegemony of the male golfer and that his family ought to be satisfied with just being on holiday.

While many golfing visitors travelled individually or with their families, several would have been visiting as members of golfing societies. The characterisation and attributes of a golf club are similar to those found in a golf society: a homogeneous group of individuals who have similarities or other shared interests or associations occupationally.¹⁰⁰ Cousins adds that the creation of golf societies dates from the 1890s and that societies were groups of golfers drawn from different clubs, but with a common bond of association, most often their profession but also from churches, schools and universities. While there were many objectives for the formation of a golf society, having fun and companionship in like-minded company were often cited as the primary reason even above the playing of competitive golf itself.¹⁰¹ Golf societies were also

⁹⁶ McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, 23

⁹⁷ *Golf in the South*, 14

⁹⁸ *Golf in the South*, 16

⁹⁹ *Golf in the South*, 26

¹⁰⁰ Vamplew, 'Playing together', 455-469.

¹⁰¹ Cousins, *Golf in Britain*, 111-2

generally nomadic without any attachment to or ownership of their own course, and so were keen and frequent visitors to a host of away clubs. Regardless of the objectives of the societies, they enjoyed the hospitality provided by the host clubs and provided welcome revenue to all the clubs they visited.¹⁰² This combination has led Vamplew to suggest that these societies could be considered as touring visitors.¹⁰³

The popularity of this form of golf tourism is shown in the diverse range of the occupations represented in the ranks of the visiting golf societies who visited the South Coast clubs. Hastings GC appeared to have been a popular destination, particularly for professional bodies, with the National Association of Local Government Officers and the Municipal Treasurers and Accounts enjoying the hospitality of the course in 1930 and then the Advertising Association in 1931.¹⁰⁴ Rye GC in Kent was the 1925 venue for the Engineering Golf Society who played a combination of individual and foursomes competitions.¹⁰⁵ A different professional occupation-based society to enjoy a touring visit was the British Dental Association who was granted permission to use the Rowlands Castle GC course for their annual competition.¹⁰⁶

Cooden Beach GC was the venue for the Fire Officers Golf Society to enjoy a weekend visit. However, according to *The Bexhill Observer*, ‘the play of the fifty to sixty members was not up to championship form’.¹⁰⁷ Price notes that in the 1930s times were hard at Cooden Beach and the club minutes reveal an increase in the number of societies permitted to visit the club as the income was of significant importance.¹⁰⁸ This was illustrated when permission was granted to the Automobile GS to be allowed to attend the weekend 27/28 June 1931 with thirty green fee-paying visitors expected to attend.¹⁰⁹ The fiscal contribution to the club’s finances was welcomed by the club’s treasurer, even if the massive influx of visitors brought remonstrations from the members. A letter

¹⁰² Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 24

¹⁰³ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 28

¹⁰⁴ *Hastings and Leonard’s Observer*, 15 February 1930

¹⁰⁵ *Sussex Express*, 29 May 1925

¹⁰⁶ Rowlands Castle GC minutes, 24 March 1937

¹⁰⁷ *Bexhill Observer*, 9 May 1925

¹⁰⁸ Price, *The Unremitting Challenge*, 58

¹⁰⁹ Cooden Beech GC minutes, 10 January 1931; The Automobile GS are still visiting Cooden Beach GC in 2020.

was sent to the Committee suggesting that a special notice be added to the notice board with the dates of visiting societies.¹¹⁰ Likewise, at Seaford GC, a member's letter referred to 'the inconvenience caused to members by the granting of the facilities to outside societies to play during weekends in the summer months.' In response, the Secretary was requested to reply stating, 'the Committee was taking steps with a view to avoiding any cause for similar complaints in future'.¹¹¹ These two accounts implied that while the clubs needed the golf society's money; it did upset some of the members with access to their course being restricted to accommodate these societies. The popularity of Littlehampton GC for visiting golf societies is exemplified by the visits from The Old Merchant Taylors Golf Society and the New Zealand Golf Society in 1930.¹¹² Bernard Darwin described the culinary and social flavour of these events. He wrote about them in *Pack Clouds Away* with an account of his weekend visit to Littlehampton for the Oxford and Cambridge Golf Society and how he ate lobster for his lunch.¹¹³ The Sussex Martlets Golf Society played Littlehampton GC annually from 1929 as part of a series of matches around Sussex and Kent courses.¹¹⁴ The Martlets were also one of two societies that took part in an inter-club foursomes match at Worthing GC in 1934 when the ten-man team of the Sussex Martlets lost to the Horticultural Golf Society before they, in turn, lost the final to Goodwood GC.¹¹⁵ Competition and visiting new courses were essential elements for the members of society golf. An intriguing match involving a different team of sportsmen was played at Rowlands Castle GC in 1936 between the players from Portsmouth Football Club and the Radio Artists Golf Society. The footballers won 5 to 2, and both teams enjoyed a beer afterwards, according to Charlie Clapham representing the Radio stars.¹¹⁶ Another golf society that represented the

¹¹⁰ Cooden Beech GC minutes, 10 November 1934

¹¹¹ Seaford GC minutes, 10 September 1938

¹¹² Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton Golf Club*, 44-45

¹¹³ Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton Golf Club*, 43

¹¹⁴ Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton Golf Club* 43, The Sussex Martlets Golf Society were part of the wandering cricket club, it aimed to provide good cricket during the summer holidays for schoolmasters, undergraduates and officers in the armed services who were on the fringe of the county side, but played golf on Sundays as no cricket was then played on the Sabbath.

¹¹⁵ *Worthing Gazette*, 30 May 1934

¹¹⁶ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 31 March 1936

performing arts was the Stage Golfing Society whose twenty-strong team lost comfortably to Brighton GC in 1928.¹¹⁷

The military, with many barracks and bases in the region, unsurprisingly supported several golf societies who visited the local courses. The Golf Society of the Honourable Artillery Company travelled to play at Littlehampton GC in 1931, and the Army were visitors to Hayling Island GC, playing a two-day foursomes match against the home club in 1936.¹¹⁸ Even after hostilities had commenced the Committee at Rowlands Castle GC resolved in September 1939 that, ‘all members of the Armed Forces may, at the pleasure of the Committee, play golf on the course for a green fee of 1s. 6d. per day’.¹¹⁹ Even if the servicemen had much greater priorities, this case shows that a form of golf tourism was still considered to be important for relaxation and morale.

Golf societies were not a phenomenon unique to the British Isles. A real colonial flavour was reported in the *Littlehampton Gazette* when an account of the visiting Ceylon Golfers Association (Society) was provided by Mr Sewnin of the Singapore Straight Times following their very wet visit to the links at Littlehampton. ‘The weather was not at all kind to the visitors...but no record would be complete without reference to the hospitality of the Littlehampton GC. The members vied with one another to welcome us.’¹²⁰ Another golf society with colonial connections was the West Indian Club GS, who visited the St. Leonard GC in 1929.¹²¹ They were repeat tourists as, a decade later, the Seaford GC Committee agreed to the same society’s application to hold their summer meeting on their course on a weekend towards the end of June, with expected numbers between ten and twelve.¹²² These two examples reflect the heritage and importance of popularity of sporting participation for those posted throughout the Empire pre-World War Two. The Royal Colombo GC would have been familiar to the

¹¹⁷ *West Sussex County Times*, 12 May 1928

¹¹⁸ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 30 March 1930; Wiseman, *A Narrative of Littlehampton Golf Club*, 44-45

¹¹⁹ Rowlands Castle GC minutes, 20 September 1939

¹²⁰ *Littlehampton Gazette*, 10 August 1923

¹²¹ *Hastings and St. Leonard’s Observer*, 9 November 1929

¹²² Seaford GC minutes, 18 February 1939

members of the visiting Ceylon Golf Association and was formed in 1879, pre-dating most of the golf clubs in England.¹²³

In contrast to the keen acceptance of golf societies, there were mixed sentiments regarding visits by women golfers. This can be gauged from the following assortment of the articles from the inter-war period where examples of institutional resistance to the inclusion of women in golf are demonstrated. Leigh-Bennett was particularly forthright and illuminating when describing the experience of one woman golfer who met with typical discriminative barriers when obstructed from playing the links at the time she wanted. ‘Very soon, the legislation about ladies playing on men’s courses will have to be drastically amended’, he pronounced. He was reacting to the tale of a visiting woman golfer who was depressed by the restrictive rule which barred her from playing for two hours, even as a county player with a low LGU handicap, it was to no avail, and she was made to wait. Leigh-Bennett’s closing comments were, ‘it was the law, but this is manifestly wrong and very stupid’.¹²⁴ This view does represent the changing position and attitude of the inter-war years and this particular woman golfer’s experience did not reflect the universal position for clubs on the South Coast, although, for some, parallels can be seen. At some clubs, women were restricted from enjoying the same courtesies and were subject to restrictions for play at certain times and on particular days. For instance, at Bexhill GC, women members or visitors could only play on the first nine holes of the men’s course on Tuesdays and Thursdays.¹²⁵ When playing Goodwood GC, ladies were required to ‘Give way to gents when asked.’¹²⁶ Whereas, a more equitable position was advocated for Brighton where it was known to be very welcoming for women golfers. The Dyke GC had a separate ladies links, and at Kemp Town GC ladies were allowed to play on the men’s course at any time.¹²⁷ The neighbouring Seaford links were declared to be deservedly well-known, with affordable fees for visitors at 5s. for two days or 10s. a week and with a splendid separate nine-hole course for ladies.¹²⁸ Particularly progressive was the case of Royal Eastbourne GC where it recognised that,

¹²³ MacPherson, *Golf's Royal Clubs*, 352

¹²⁴ *Golf in the South*, 79

¹²⁵ *Golf*, 18 August 1899

¹²⁶ *Golf in the South*, 107

¹²⁷ *Golf*, 18 August 1899

¹²⁸ *Golf*, 18 August 1899

‘women have recently been admitted to the clubhouse and the course on equal terms with the men, this is a very sensible form of legislation which will have a beneficial effect on revenue and cement good feelings.’

Further west along the coast, Ferndown GC was described as ‘a great place for the ladies. There were no restrictions whatever as to their playing. They used the lounge with the men and had their own wing of the clubhouse besides.’¹²⁹ These two accounts show a growing form of equality on and off the course with the women enjoying unrestricted access to the clubhouse. This was extremely significant as the clubhouse was frequently considered to be an even greater bastion of a male preserve than the links. A striking and symbolic instance of the imperial pre-World War One era was the contents of a letter received by the Rowlands Castle GC Committee. It was from the LGU asking the club to make Colonial lady visitors to England, who were members of Colonial Affiliated Clubs, temporary Honorary Members for a period not exceeding seven days.¹³⁰ While this only represented opportunities for a small and privileged group of women golfers, it did reflect the LGU’s progressive and even assertive efforts to serve their members when they were home on leave from their overseas residences.

It was noted previously how competitions were seen as opportunities to inspire golf tourism and dedicated events for women were organised with the same objective in mind. At Seaford GC in 1900, a trio of visitors from London, Mrs Martin (Wimbledon GC), Miss Pascoe (Princes-Mitcham GC) and Mrs Hunter (Bush Hill Park GC) occupied the first three places in the ladies event. Several decades later, an event at Willingdon GC, was documented to have attracted forty entries from across Sussex to the 1937 Summer Open Meeting.¹³¹ Although these clubs deemed there was sufficient demand to organise women-only competitions this did not appear to be the case for all clubs. In an attempt to encourage more women players to Hayling Island GC, a request was made by the ladies to the parent men’s club that visitors playing in competitions should not have to pay green fees. However, this was rejected because as the men had to

¹²⁹ *Golf in the South*, 71

¹³⁰ Rowlands Castle GC minutes, 5 February 1913

¹³¹ *Eastbourne Gazette*, 9 June 1937

pay and so the ladies should follow suit.¹³² This response was not the form of equality on the links the women were seeking.

Golf, like Tennis, was a sport where both sexes could enjoy a sporting holiday together, with mixed-pairs being a popular format of golf, on account of the game's rules and handicapping system that allowed women to play competitively in the company of men.¹³³ This also reflects the discussion in Chapter Three, with the frequent and powerful impact that the use of women in advertising had had in popularising and promoting the acceptance of golf tourism opportunities for women to participate in single-sex or mixed-gender golf. The letters page in *Golf* demonstrated this demand, with an enquiry: 'Wanted – a good sheltered and dry golf links with a ladies course attached on which gentlemen can play with a temporary membership.' The response was, 'Try Folkestone, an excellent 9-hole course between the Downs and the railway, easily accessible from a large variety of hotels and boarding or lodging houses.'¹³⁴ However, the tone of the advertising literature was not always so inclusive and this is exemplified in a special feature that appeared in *Golf Illustrated* promoting Golf Holiday Resorts in the Kent and Sussex district. What is most striking is the sexist perspective, by modern standards, that the article adopts in targeting the male golfer. The introduction states that the feature was, 'intended for the golfer pure and simple, yet we shall not be unmindful of Mrs Golfer.' It attempts to both mitigate this message but further compounds it in its bias, when promoting the non-golfing amusements on offer for the golfer's family. It even suggests that rather than being regarded as a selfish animal, the male golfer should be satisfied that his family are catered for when he is playing his golf.¹³⁵ It proposes that ladies' golf is available in Kent and Sussex, but really, Mr Golfer's wife should be looking after the children and not joining her husband on the links.

In addition to measures to widen participation by gender, there is some evidence that class or perhaps socio-economic barriers were addressed as affordability and economics

¹³² Viv Fitch, *From then until now...A History of Hayling Ladies Golf Club* (Hayling Ladies Golf Club, 2018), 20

¹³³ George, 'Ladies First', 288-308.

¹³⁴ *Golf*, 26 October 1900

¹³⁵ *Golf Illustrated*, 16 June 1899.

were considerations for some visitors. When asked, ‘Which golf links in Sussex or Hampshire is one allowed to play on a payment not exceeding 2s. 6d. per week?’ *Golf’s* editor wrote, ‘At Chichester, there is a 9-hole course of an inland nature, with clubhouse, situated a distance about three miles from Chichester Station, visitors 2s. 6d. per week.’¹³⁶ On the same theme, it was noted that Brighton had six courses with very reasonable green fees: ‘Men are not going to Brighton primarily for the golf, as men go to Deal, but Brighton has the allure of a much wider scope.’¹³⁷ Value for money rather than the quality of the golf was the message from these two illustrations. An account of what golfers might experience when visiting Littlehampton hinted at the affordability of some of the local accommodation. ‘Those who do not care for hotel life, and study economy, will find the Surrey Boarding House to be the most comfortable quarters at a reasonable rate.’¹³⁸

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter illustrates how private golf clubs recognised and developed their offer to cater for the manifest demand for golf tourism. Predictably their motivation was frequently commercially-led, given their often precarious economic existence. Their means to attract the golfing tourist was through a combination of casual green fee-paying visitors or for competitions when all were welcome: members, locals and visiting golfers. These competitions were often part of a broader town event and sometimes, as at Bexhill, a joint venture between the town’s three clubs was for their long-term mutual benefit. Dormy Houses were another method of attracting visitors and generating income for some clubs, by accommodating the golfing visitor on-site in club owned and catered premises that made their stay as easy and as enjoyable as possible. The research has also shown that the ease of access by railway to the South Coast courses, from London in particular, meant the attraction of being a member of a second golf club was viable. It allowed for scores of city-dwelling players to participate in frequent holiday golf opportunities. With their catchment area restricted by their coastal

¹³⁶ *Golf*, 29 June 1900

¹³⁷ *Golf in the South*, 25

¹³⁸ *Golf*, 6 November 1891

location, the seaside private golf club was very much open for business and welcomed an abundance of golfers from outside the immediate surrounding area to provide essential additional income.

Touring golf societies offered additional opportunities for clubs to attract large numbers of golfing tourists for a day or weekend visit, either on a one-off basis or as a regular annual arrangement. The assortment of the societies was extensive demonstrating the broad appeal of golf, but generally they represented professional and educated professions or other sporting groups and in a few instances, women's golfing societies. Access to the links, as part of a golf society, was thus gained through one's profession and not through membership of a specific club or necessarily one's ability, indicating how this form of golf helped to broaden participation in the game. The research within this thesis found that some societies comprised of individuals from socio-economic categories that otherwise might not have been so welcome, but when combined and in a managed fashion were permitted to play.

Without doubt, there was some evidence of restricted practices and disquiet at some clubs where clear rules were in place to limit the times and days when guests were able to play. Particular concerns were expressed with societies being granted access at weekends, causing congestion on the links and the possible interference with any club competition that was for members only. For some of the more elite clubs in the region, there was a sense of aloofness and prejudice against visitors playing on their prized links. Here the snobbery associated with golf was unyielding regardless of location; it perpetuated the gender and class-based exclusions that were reflective of other areas of social life. Nevertheless golf tourism by the end of the 1930s did appear to offer a more liberal and progressive attitude. Firstly, women were more welcome than on their home, urban courses and were also catered for with women-only competitions or part of mixed events. Secondly, Sunday golf was more accepted and commonplace at the South Coast private links because it both maximised income for the clubs and allowed time for the travelling players while on holiday to play. The local, national and golfing press was crucial in reporting on the clubs and events and helping to contribute to the popularity of golf tourism with a stream of regular news stories that fed the public's interest and curiosity. A key influencer in encouraging broader public participation was news of celebrity golfers playing on the seaside links, be they royalty or minor aristocracy. They all helped to create awareness and interest that led to the desire in the urban dwelling

golfer to become motivated to take action and frequent the seaside links. Hence the golfing holiday became a popular pastime for individuals, for groups and families, even if the man of the household was frequently the only family member playing golf, as access to the resort's golf club was the primary reason for their common choice of holiday destination. However, the private golf clubs were not the only provider of seaside golf, as the South Coast's local corporations quickly realised how they could also benefit by satisfying this demand, through diversifying their resort amenities and building municipal golf courses. This diversification is explored in the next two chapters.

Chapter 6

Developing Municipal Golf as Visitor Attractions at South Coast Resorts

6. Developing Municipal Golf as Visitor Attractions at South Coast Resorts

For others, such as Bournemouth and Eastbourne municipal investment in courses was specifically to entice visitors whose spending would impact beyond the fairway.¹

‘Good Brighton folks, come every one, From Kemp Town cliffs to Aldrington,
And give your thanks for what’s been done, On the grounds of Hollingbury.
The sapient fathers of the town, have laid a public golf links down,
And the brightest gem in their civic crown, Is the links of Hollingbury.’²

6.1 Introduction

The aims and motivations for corporations to invest in and then develop municipal golf courses as a means of attracting a new, and more socially diverse range of tourists to visit their resorts, is a central theme of this thesis. This aspect is framed in the narrative of local competition with rival resorts for the emerging golf tourist market and the need to provide new attractions and facilities to enhance the resorts’ offer. To achieve this, it identifies and analyses several case study towns and cities on the South Coast that provided this form of public golfing provision. The most prominent of these is Bournemouth, given access to the greatest amount of relevant material and, more importantly, its primacy in providing municipal golf in England. This venture was so successful that within eleven years, a second course was laid out in the town. The impact of these corporate investments into popular sporting amenities influenced the neighbouring and rival resort town of Weymouth, into investigating the opportunity to provide their own public links to compete in the growing golfing tourism market. Brighton then offers some further evidence of this theme, before this study provides new evidence that Brighton’s rival seaside resort of Eastbourne undertook a different approach and resisted direct corporation investment into golf, which is contrary to most previous understanding. Finally, and somewhat surprisingly, the inclusion of Portsmouth completes this study into tourism inspired investment into municipal golf.

From these case studies, three key themes emerge that represented the barometer of public attitudes towards this policy. The first is the broader economic factors linked to

¹ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 37

² Ronald Ross, *Golfing Annual 1909/10*

the return on investment that will be considered, when evaluating this potentially contentious policy of investing locally-raised public money into facilities for visitors and into what was frequently considered to be an elitist sport. This argument will be balanced by extensive evidence of increased secondary spend benefiting the local community and businesses that were associated with tourism. The second theme revolves around land. Here the paradox of different policies will be reflected through comparisons of corporations, either purchasing land to provide recreational amenities or protecting open space from the potential threat from future building development by buying land. Additional cases illustrate where existing golf courses were retained, but provided instances of civic conflict from the anti-golf lobby, where access to traditionally open common-land was taken away from the general public for use only by the golfing elite. The third theme is the aspect of community values and morals. This mainly focuses on developing the issue of Sunday Play, reflecting the conflict between the Church and their beliefs in protecting the sanctity of the Sabbath and local traders and business, who were looking to maximise the revenue-making opportunities presented by tourism. The ultimate decision-makers in this, the local corporations, were equally challenged as their members were representing ratepayers from both camps and were mindful of the investment that they had made in the golf courses. This issue will be considered in the broader context of historical changes to national public entertainment legislation and the different attitudes, priorities and circumstances across the various towns.

6.2 Developments at the Seaside

It was noted in the second chapter of this thesis how British society began visiting the seaside resorts from the early eighteenth century for a variety of reasons: medicinal, social or solely for relaxation. Moreover, as Vamplew and Ross have indicated above, several local corporations started to recognise the benefits of investing in a range of new attractions to supplement the natural features the resorts had to offer. This developed into a virtual arms-race as rival resorts competed with their neighbours to provide increasing amounts of exciting new amenities to attract the discerning tourist in ever-increasing numbers. These amenities included the building of grand entertainment structures such as piers and concert halls and the laying-out of public gardens, complete with bandstands, where visitors could enjoy the fresh seaside air while relaxing and

listening to music. The provision of these more passive visitor attractions was combined with facilities for the more physically active, including tennis courts, bowling greens and especially public or municipal golf courses, to cater for the increasingly health-conscious and sports enthusiastic Victorians. However, these developments were not without a degree of conflict and controversy. While there were elements of Municipal Socialism through the creation of facilities that the local population could enjoy, many were principally aimed at attracting and then being consumed by tourists, despite being funded by local ratepayers' money. A more appropriate term for this policy would, therefore, be Municipal Capitalism, as the corporations were undoubtedly looking to legitimise capitalism while aiming for a financial return on their investment.³ This was twofold, initially through the fees paid by customers and collected by the corporation, but also through the generation of secondary spend for local trades and business that benefitted from the influx of visitors to the resort. Thus, the corporations were effectively in an informal partnership with the local ratepayers and businesses, acting as virtual shareholders in an unofficial local company that represented their mutual interests in the rivalry with neighbouring and competitor resorts.⁴

When considering these corporations in political affiliation terms, the dominant party was almost always the Conservatives, reflecting the predominance of the elderly middle-classes residing at the South Coast resorts.⁵ However, party politics did not play an open role in most corporations. From the early Bournemouth elections (1890) candidates campaigned on local issues and without any overt political persuasion being recorded. When any affiliation was declared, this did not prevent them from acting or voting as individuals rather than along party lines. As Roberts suggests, Bournemouth Corporation's initiatives were frequently, 'a parochial response to local conditions.'⁶ Similarly, in Eastbourne during the early decades of the twentieth century, the

³ Jon Davies, 'From municipal socialism to...municipal capitalism?', *Journal of Local Government Studies* 12, no.2 (1988): 19-22

⁴ Walton, *The British seaside*, 170

⁵ Walton, *The British seaside*, 169

⁶ Richard Roberts, 'The Corporation as impresario: the municipal provision of entertainment in Victorian and Edwardian Bournemouth,' in *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939*, ed. John K. Walton, and James Walvin, (Manchester University Press, 1983).

Corporation was controlled by a non-party group of self-styled independent councillors who claimed to govern in the interests of all ratepayers, despite nominally being elected as either Conservative or Liberal. It was only a handful of Labour councillors who were consistently recognised as representing a specific political party.⁷ Brighton during this same period was solidly Conservative, despite its more radical history of Chartist sympathies and the return of a limited number of Liberal MPs.⁸

This rush to the seaside was made easier with the spread of the railways which reached Brighton in 1841 and Bournemouth in 1870.⁹ This empowered a much greater cross-section of society with the opportunity to holiday at the seaside, not just the elite. However, as Huggins and Tolson identified, the impact of this expanding holiday industry was sport which for the local population was restricted and difficult. The traditional sporting Saturday was consumed by change-over day with the transit of thousands of tourists in and out of hotels and at the railway stations.¹⁰ One of the new and increasingly essential and in-demand attractions at the seaside was golf.¹¹ This was initially played on courses that utilised the natural environment, close to the shoreline which made for perfect links style golf courses. As Graves and Cornish have noted, these strips provided a natural golfing landscape with ideal vegetation, in particular, the blades of grass standing stiff and erect as a result of the salt air, which supported the ball. The landscape was devoid of trees, and the sandy soil was well-drained.¹² With these conditions being prevalent, two of the first eight English seaside courses to be established were within the South Coast region, on Hayling Island and at Bembridge, but these were both private members clubs.¹³ However, golf before World War One was generally the preserve of the upper middle-classes, and the ordinary working man, local or visitor, had little opportunity to play golf as access to a private golf club was usually beyond their means.

⁷ Sam Davies and Bob Morley, *County Borough Elections in England and Wales, 1919–1938: A Comparative Analysis Volume 3*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2006), 525

⁸ Walton, *The British seaside*, 172

⁹ Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, 23

¹⁰ Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain', 99-115

¹¹ Walton, *The British seaside*, 103

¹² Robert Graves and Geoffrey Cornish, *Golf Course Design* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998), 3

¹³ *Golfing Annual 1894/95*; John T. Milton, *A History of Royal Eastbourne Golf Club 1887-1987* (Royal Eastbourne Golf Club, 1987), 3

6.3 Bournemouth and Weymouth – early golfing rivals

With this socio-economic barrier in mind, along with the increased demand for golf, some seaside towns were persuaded to develop municipal courses for their visitors who played on courses at home and, for a variety of reasons, were keen to play while on holiday.¹⁴ The first municipal course in England was consequently laid out at Meyrick Park in Bournemouth in 1894. The local corporations provided these municipal courses for locals and visitors alike to enjoy; they helped to widen participation by allowing different classes and genders to play through charging lower green fees. In comparison, in Scotland, while the majority of golf courses at the turn of the century were also private members clubs, there was a greater propensity in the provision of pay and play municipal courses. A contemporary account, appeared in *Madame*, self-promoted as ‘the magazine for women who think’, identified that, in Scotland, municipal golf enterprises were commonplace, but only a few rare exceptions were found in England.¹⁵

When the Meyrick Park course was proposed in Bournemouth it was initially an attempt to attract a better class of tourist to the resort, rather than to provide an affordable amenity for the lower-middle or working-class golfer. The fees were set intentionally high to make it appeal to the more affluent tourist at the expense of those at the lower end of the socio-economic scale.¹⁶ Bournemouth was a late developer as a town, and this presented the town with an almost unique opportunity to take advantage of this rising demand for golf tourism. Until the early nineteenth century, the land where Bournemouth now stands was just heathland where cattle grazed. Indeed as recently as 1851, Bournemouth had been a little village. However, the population of Bournemouth rapidly increased through the nineteenth century from a mere, 695 in 1851 to 37,000 in 1891. This population growth was aided by the rise of the holiday resort and the coming of the railway.¹⁷

¹⁴ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 67

¹⁵ *Bournemouth Daily Echo*, 23 January 1904

¹⁶ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 38; Christopher Cairns, *No Tie Required; How the rich stole golf* (London: Headline Books, 2005), 41

¹⁷ Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, 23

This connection to the rail network and the consequence of the vastly improved accessibility it provided, encouraged the Corporation to invest in new amenities to attract even greater numbers of tourists to the town. A benefit of the late growth of the town was the amount of accessible common land that was available for development, including land for golf. Under the terms of the Christchurch Enclosures Act 1802, certain areas of Bournemouth had been set aside as commons under the trusteeship of the Lord of the Manor, Sir George Ivison Tapps.¹⁸ The transformation of these commons into civic parks was initially a contentious issue that soured relations between the townsfolk and Sir George Ivison Tapps' grandson, Sir George Elliott Meyrick Tapps-Gervis-Meyrick, who by the end of the century had inherited the land. However, Bournemouth's incorporation as a Borough in 1890, together with the 1889 Five Parks Act, settled the matter in the townsfolk's favour and decreed the commons to be laid out as public open spaces. Under the terms of the Act, the Corporation was not allowed to sell or build on the parks. They were required to keep the land on trust for public recreation and to permit the townsfolk the liberty to engage in formal or informal activities within each of the five parks.¹⁹ This ruling prompted Sir George Meyrick in 1894 to gift the Bournemouth Corporation 118 acres, but with the stipulation that 60 acres should be used for the playing of golf. The only monetary payment that he received for this act of generosity was concerning the Turbary Rights he previously enjoyed on the land.²⁰ According to a report in *Golf* on the opening of the course, a sum of £520 was paid to the owner of the turf rights. This was also highlighted in the Council's Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes where Sir George Meyrick was reported to have accepted the Committee's offer of £4 1s per acre in consideration for the cessation of the rights.²¹

This progressive development prompted the town's Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee to meet and consider the task of laying out the golf links at what was

¹⁸ Vincent May and Jan March, *Bournemouth 1810-2010: From Smugglers to Surfers* (Wimborne Minister: The Dovecote Press, 2010) 19

¹⁹ May and March, *Bournemouth 1810-2010*, 96; Bournemouth Borough Council Act 1985; Charity Commission for England and Wales, No. 299740

²⁰ Turbary Right allowed certain householders, residing in the district, the right to cut turf for fuel and for which the landowner received an income.

²¹ *Golf*, 7 December 1894

ultimately called Meyrick Park, in honour of Sir George Meyrick's benevolence. It was further recommended that the Committee be empowered to take the opinion of a golf expert as to the suitability of the sixty acres of ground that was designated for the playing of golf.²² This recommendation was in keeping with accepted practice. Golf course designing was still a relatively new discipline. Very few people understood the basic architectural principles required for a golf course layout and most organisations commissioning a new course employed a professional golfer who combined playing with designing courses to provide the expert opinion.²³ Bournemouth's preference was to approach Tom Dunn, a Scottish golfer who had finished in 6th place in the 1868 Open Championship at Prestwick and had three further top-ten finishes. At the time of Bournemouth's approach, he was the professional at Tooting Bec GC in London. Over his lifetime, Dunn was employed by several other London clubs, including Hanger Hill GC and London Scottish GC and was a prolific designer of golf courses.²⁴

Negotiations with Dunn quickly progressed, and he was invited to attend a meeting to inspect the proposed land before submitting a report as to its suitability and the likely cost of laying out the golf course. For this task, Dunn asked for a fee of £3 3s.²⁵ According to *Golf*, the challenge Dunn faced was monumental to transform the land from, 'a howling wilderness of heather and whin (gorse) of absolutely no utility or benefit to the town...to a place where citizens could recreate themselves with the playing of popular games.'²⁶ Despite this challenge, Dunn's report was received within two weeks, and the Committee approved his proposals before asking him to submit a price to undertake the works.²⁷ Within a month, Dunn had replied estimating the cost of the works to be £1,500 and that his fees would be a further £125 to superintend the work. The Committee accepted his quote and requested; 'that he start as soon as possible'.²⁸ Dunn did not disappoint and confirmed that he would start work on 12th

²² Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 1 December 1893

²³ Holt, Lewis and Vamplew, *The PGA 1901-2001*, 39

²⁴ The Dunns, *Through the Green*, September 2008

²⁵ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 18 December 1893

²⁶ *Golf*, 21 September 1894

²⁷ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 5 January 1894

²⁸ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 2 February 1894

February 1894, a period of just fifty-three days since he first visited Bournemouth.²⁹ The rapid pace of these negotiations demonstrates the keenness of both parties to undertake the project. Not surprisingly, Dunn's initial estimate for the work was optimistic, reflecting *Golf's* damning assessment of the condition of the land. Subsequently, the *1895 Golfing Annual* informs us that although the land was gifted, a final laying out cost of £2,000 was incurred by the Corporation as so much work was required to put the ground in order.³⁰ Further capital costs were incurred when the Committee considered the plans for a golf pavilion in July, and a budget of £1,000 for the structure and furniture was agreed.³¹ Subsequently, a tender from a Mr William for the Corporation pavilion was accepted for £897, providing the Corporation with a small saving and a facility for golfers to use before and after their round. This extra investment was made by the Corporation to offer visiting golfers a richer and more relaxed experience.³² Evidence shows that this was not the end of the Corporation's costs as they were very aware of the need to market the new course and to maximise the return on their investment. A few months before it was opened, the Corporation started to promote the course through posters, with photographic views of the park and links and entered into a contract with WH Smith to display posters at fifty railway stations across the country at the cost of £25. They agreed on a weekly insertion of an advert in *Golf* magazine for the three months before the course being opened.³³ These two initiatives demonstrate that promotion of the course to attract golfing visitors, and the associated income, was very much an underpinning objective of the Corporation.

On 5th October 1894, the Town Clerk was instructed to invite Sir George Meyrick to open the course officially. At the same meeting Tom Dunn, having almost completed his contract to lay out the course, had agreed to become the course's first professional, starting on 5th November 1894 with a salary of 30 shillings a week.³⁴ There were two

²⁹ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 9 February 1894

³⁰ *Golfing Annual 1894/95*, 140

³¹ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 25 July 1894

³² Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 31 August 1894

³³ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 10 August 1894; 31 August 1894

³⁴ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 5 October 1894

courses initially constructed at Meyrick Park; the long course, 4,500 yards with 18-holes and also a 9-hole ladies course with short holes at 700 yards in total length.³⁵

Lady Meyrick officially opened the course on Wednesday 28th November 1894, with the celebratory activities taking place over two days. This programme reflects the importance that the Corporation attached to the venture and how they wanted to maximise the opportunity to publicise their investment in Municipal Capitalism and the addition to the town's amenities. The first day saw the formalities of the Grand Opening, with a series of speeches, presentations and toasts before Lady Meyrick was invited to hit the first tee shot on the newly laid-out course. This was followed by a public luncheon for one hundred guests, and in the evening a concert was held in the Winter Gardens. Those present were entertained by the band of the Grenadier Guards, who were paid 455 guineas to perform. The band added a further element of grandeur and importance to the opening ceremony.³⁶

Day two was devoted to a series of matches to baptise the course and were played before large crowds of interested spectators. The participating players included Horace Hutchinson and J.H. Taylor. This was another astute decision by the Corporation as Hutchinson, in addition to being a famous, accomplished amateur golfer, was also a prolific writer on golf. He was sure to describe his experience in the various newspapers and periodicals that he contributed columns to and thus further publicise the new course to a broader golfing audience. While some were critical of Dunn's course designs as being formulaic, Hutchinson credits his work as laying the foundation of all good golf architecture, at a time when few knew what they were doing.³⁷ This statement by such a well-respected authority on golf would have helped to deflect any negative reviews of the links at Meyrick Park. J.H. Taylor had won his first of five Open Championships at Royal St. Georges earlier in 1894 and so his participation demonstrated the ultimate test and endorsement of the new course. The two celebrities were joined by the newly appointed club professional, Tom Dunn, and two other local amateur players. There

³⁵ *Golf*, 7 December 1894

³⁶ *Golf*, 7 December 1894; Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 7 December 1894

³⁷ Horace Hutchinson, *Fifty Years of Golf* (London; Country Life, 1919), 169

were medals for the gentlemen that, according to the Council minutes, were not to exceed £20 in cost and the professionals received a fee, £6 for Taylor and £3 for Dunn, reflecting their respective cultural and social status.³⁸

When first opened, the public charges were set at 6d for 18-holes. Members of the Bournemouth GC could play for free if the club paid Bournemouth Corporation fifteen shillings, per member, per year.³⁹ The Bournemouth GC was a private club, initially formed in 1890 that played on a 9-hole course at Brockenhurst, twenty miles east of Bournemouth, but transferred its headquarters to the Meyrick Park course in 1895 and built their own separate pavilion.⁴⁰ This agreement for a private club to play over a public course was not unusual. It mirrored the agreement enjoyed by the R&A at St. Andrews and provided the Bournemouth Corporation with added income. The importance of making attractive offers available for visitors was also recognised, with monthly visitor tickets available at ten shillings and weekly tickets at four shillings. At the same Council meeting, it was agreed that newspapers and books, including the popular titles *The Field*, *Golf* and *The Sporting and Dramatic News* and Mr Hutchinson's book on golf, be provided in the pavilion for the enjoyment of golfers. Furthermore, the councillors invited tenders for the privilege of selling refreshments at the pavilion with the tariff to be the same as in the Winter Gardens.⁴¹ These decisions further illustrate how the Corporation was making significant efforts to provide a very comfortable golfing experience for the visiting player to match the environment that they might enjoy at their home club. Indeed, the *1904/05 Golfing Annual* described the pavilion to be commodious.⁴² Demand to play the new course was high as Corporation minutes show that by January 1895 the receipts for the playing of golf were already at £200 and a further £20 for the rent for the refreshment bar in the Corporation pavilion had been collected. Unfortunately, it was not recorded how this income was apportioned between locals and visitors.⁴³ However, the minutes reveal that there was one example of modernity that would potentially have increased usage that proved to be beyond the

³⁸ *Golf*, 7 December 1894; Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 12 October 1894

³⁹ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 23 April 1894

⁴⁰ L.C. Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country* (Bournemouth: Roman Press Limited, 1993), 44

⁴¹ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 7 December 1894

⁴² *Golfing Annual 1904/05*, 155

⁴³ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 25 January 1895

vision of the councillors when they did not entertain a proposal that a telephone be connected to the pavilion. However, they did recommend that the links should be open for play on Good Friday, which would have been a popular decision with the visitors enjoying an Easter Break in Bournemouth in 1895.⁴⁴ This was very enterprising, but also potentially controversial: as Lowerson acknowledged, many clubs and particularly corporations undertook Sunday Observance, prohibiting the use of any building or room for public entertainment or debate on a Sunday, on religious grounds.⁴⁵ This frequently extended to the playing of sport, which could be extended to Good Friday given its importance to the church. Indeed, Sunday play was not permitted on the Meyrick Park course as late as 1935.⁴⁶ The decision not to install a telephone was reversed nine months later.⁴⁷ Two further examples of publicising the golf course, outside of Bournemouth, are seen when in April 1895 Dunn submitted a list to the Committee comprising of a number of the major golf clubs and the principal London and provincial hotels. He requested that the Corporation contact the establishments asking them to display a copy of an advertisement for Meyrick Park Golf Course. To complement this, the Borough Surveyor was asked to place twelve enamel plates in suitable positions to direct the public and important visitors to the golf links.⁴⁸ Evidence of the early financial success of the course is further confirmed through the Committee minutes in July 1896. Expenditure for the year to date was £389, which included £100 to hire a horse to assist with the fairway mowing, but this was offset by income at £470.⁴⁹ Towards the end of 1896, the Committee made further advances to make the playing of golf more accessible at Meyrick Park. This was facilitated by allowing ladies to play on Wednesdays and limiting the restrictions to only Saturdays and Bank Holidays, although at all times, ‘ladies still had to let men through without being asked to’.⁵⁰ This reflects George’s research which recognised that while golf did permit greater

⁴⁴ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 29 March 1895

⁴⁵ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle classes*, 268

⁴⁶ *Golf in the South*, 97

⁴⁷ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 6 December 1895

⁴⁸ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 30 April 1895

⁴⁹ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 27 July 1896

⁵⁰ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 15 October 1896

participation for women than most sports, there was still a degree of segregation and restrictions applied to Lady Golfers.⁵¹

The Meyrick Park course proved to be very enjoyable and successful, even if some visiting golfers considered it to be rather short. *The Bournemouth Graphic* in 1903 carried accounts of golfers having to wait for an unreasonable amount of time to drive off. This illustrates its popularity and would have helped to persuade the Corporation to agree a budget for a second municipal course to be built in the town. A Council official stated, 'that it was an absolute necessity and vital to keep pace with the great growth of the game'.⁵² As was the case at Meyrick Park, land for the new second municipal course in Bournemouth was originally owned by the Elliot Meyrick Tapps-Gervis-Meyrick estate and was known as Common No. 60; the property was sold to Bournemouth Corporation in November 1900 for £3,689. The terms of the acquisition were that the land would be dedicated as open space for the enjoyment of the public under the management of the Corporation, in perpetuity.⁵³ This provided the Corporation with the land and an opportunity to capitalise on the demand for a second municipal course, while still complying with the terms of the agreement. The park and the golf course contained within it were named Queen's Park to commemorate the coronation of King Edward VII and his Queen Alexander in 1902, with another of the five parks in Bournemouth, being named King's Park at the same meeting.⁵⁴ In February 1903, the Borough Surveyor engaged J.H. Taylor to inspect the park to lay out a new links. His report to the Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee, unsurprisingly, concluded that, 'the ground...can be made into one of the finest courses one can possibly imagine and one that will lift Bournemouth into one of the best centres for golf in the south of England'.⁵⁵ This development, however, was not universally popular, with the Corporation receiving some objections from residents and associations. Still, despite these being acknowledged, there are no records of them ever being further considered

⁵¹ George, 'Ladies First', 288-308.

⁵² Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country*, 46-47

⁵³ Stephen Gadd, *The Park: A History of Queen's Park Bournemouth* (Queens Park Action Association, 2003), 8-12

⁵⁴ County Borough of Bournemouth Council minutes, 20 May 1902; *Bournemouth Daily Echo*, 21 May 1902

⁵⁵ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 16 April 1903

by the members.⁵⁶ Additionally, the local paper only recorded minimal levels of concern from residents with one letter published asking if the rumours of plans for the laying out of another golf links and possible general improvements to the park were true. The author thought that the money might be better spent elsewhere, but their comments were not explicitly related to the proposal for the golf and were not elaborated on.⁵⁷

The new course was officially opened on 25th October 1905 by the Mayor of Bournemouth, Mr J. Elmes Bealey, J.P, and with a match of the highest quality, comprising of all three of the famous Great Triumvirate, Taylor, Braid and Vardon. These three golfers dominated golf in the two decades before World War One winning the Open Championship sixteen times between them, and they were joined by Scottish golfer Sandy Hurd who had also enjoyed Open Championship success in 1902.⁵⁸ This foursome would have guaranteed the maximum interest in the local and national press and further ensured that the new Queen's Park course would attract additional visitors to the town to challenge themselves on the links that had hosted this quartet of champions. The *Bournemouth Daily Echo* reported that a crowd of 2,000 watched the exhibition match, which provides clear evidence of the drawing power that these players brought.⁵⁹ Indeed, *Golf Illustrated* included an anonymous quote from one of the illustrious golfers present, that Bournemouth needed to be congratulated on its good sense in providing such a valuable asset which other resorts should follow to give a direct boon to the ratepayers.⁶⁰ This was complemented by an entry in *Golfing Annual* that the Queen's Park greens were large and undulating and, for the obvious benefit of visitors, the *Golfing Annual* referred to the trams that ran to the course, with its spacious clubhouse and that the visitor fees were as Meyrick Park.⁶¹ The total cost of all the works on laying-out the course, which included an irrigation lake and the various golf-related buildings, was more than £15,000. The clubhouse was considered to be a fine building, constructed at the cost of over £3,000. It dominated the course and the eastern approach

⁵⁶ Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country*, 46

⁵⁷ *Bournemouth Daily Echo*, 24 November 1902

⁵⁸ *Golf Illustrated*, 3 November 1905

⁵⁹ *Bournemouth Daily Echo*, 25 October 1905

⁶⁰ *Bournemouth Daily Echo*, 25 October 1905

⁶¹ *Golfing Annual 1905/06*, 71

to the town until it was demolished in 1966 as part of highway improvements.⁶² The clubhouse made a significant statement and helped attract many visitors and also important tournaments to the course. The importance of golf to the town was recognised in 1908 when the *Bournemouth Guide* stated:

It would be difficult to speak too highly of Bournemouth as a Golfing Centre. The enterprise of the Corporation has shown itself very markedly in this direction. At Queens Park a second golf course has been made and when it opened players and visitors were unanimous that it elevated Bournemouth to be one of the best-Golfing centres in the country.⁶³

If this view might be considered too biased, being written by someone with a vested interest, then an independent endorsement by a contemporary writer and authority on golf provides greater validity. John Sutherland certainly fulfils this requirement. Sutherland held the position of Secretary at Royal Dornoch GC for 58 years until he died in 1941, and he also wrote a weekly column for *The Daily News* from 1906-1912, under the title Golf Causerie. Writing in 1911, Sutherland extolled the virtues of Bournemouth's extensive golfing portfolio, including the two private courses at Parkstone and Broadstone, but also the municipal courses; in particular, he favoured the links at Queen's Park. This stance was particularly true during the winter when most inland courses were at the mercy of the British weather, ranging from liquid slush when exceptionally wet, or cast-iron hard, when frost was spoiling the golfer's enjoyment. Either way, according to Sutherland:

Most players found the playing of approach shots to be unsatisfactory, chancy and full of despair. Whereas, Bournemouth's seaside courses enjoyed sun and genial warmth which enabled golfers to enjoy their golf on greens that rewarded good shots which were not a lottery varying from the challenge of pudding-like soft spots to the ball diverting randomness off frozen worm-casts.⁶⁴

Sutherland highlighted that London golfers had taken advantage of their proximity to the resort and its links and had descended in their hundreds each weekend to enjoy these favourable conditions. Furthermore, he wrote how in 1911, golfers from the Midlands and North of England were benefiting from the railway companies working together to

⁶² Gadd, *The Park*, 8-12; Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country*, 48; *Golf Illustrated*, 3 November 1905

⁶³ *1908 Official Guide Bournemouth*, 47

⁶⁴ Golf Causerie, *The Daily News*, 11 March 1911

provide the Sunshine Express, which carried sun-starved golfers from the northern cities to Bournemouth in just six hours.⁶⁵ Sutherland considered both courses to be at their best in March and April, but Queen's Park in particular, it being longer, more challenging and set in charming countryside. By comparison, he thought Meyrick Park without any great character. Being located closer to the centre of town, it was more often crowded with beginners who possessed neither great skill nor knowledge of the rules and etiquette. His advice was, 'to start early, at about the time such people are at the marmalade stage of breakfast'. However, what Sutherland also recognised was the foresight shown by the Corporation in attracting golfers to the town and the associated money and business that they brought with them. Finally, he noted that the visiting golfer was at no disadvantage to the local player in terms of privileges or priorities when playing the links. This demonstrates how welcoming the courses were towards visiting golfers and provided further free marketing for Bournemouth as a golfing centre.⁶⁶ This positive endorsement was also echoed by a visiting US Senator under an article titled 'Go-ahead Bournemouth.' In it, he extolled the merits of the town as a winter health resort that drew in a large number of visitors to Bournemouth, who otherwise might winter at St. Andrews.⁶⁷ This comparison to the home of golf was extremely flattering but also a useful piece of public relations for the town. These articles, from two impartial but respected sources, reinforce a number of the advantages of the municipal golf offer in Bournemouth. Its southern location and temperate weather, the closeness to London, improved transport links which enabled rapid transport from the north, well-designed course(s) and the hospitality shown to the visiting golfer. They also recognised the business acumen shown by the Corporation through the generation of secondary spend that benefited the local service industry providers within the town.

Bournemouth's profitable success with golf did not go unnoticed by its local rival, Weymouth. This success was particularly annoying to Weymouth, given

⁶⁵ Ibid; Trains from Manchester to Bournemouth would today take approximately 5 hours.

⁶⁶ Golf Causerie, *The Daily News*, 11 March 1911

⁶⁷ *Bournemouth Daily Echo*, 20 August 1900

Bournemouth's much more recent history as a tourist destination. By 1900 Weymouth was already very well established as a spa and holiday resort with splendid Georgian architecture along the seafront and a popular sandy beach.⁶⁸ An article in the local Dorset paper, the *Southern Times* in 1905 stated that:

Every important pleasure place has found that golf links are indispensable and the better the links, the better the class of people attracted... There is a large and increasing class of people who practically live the golf and who shun every town that cannot provide them with the means to enjoy the sport under the best conditions. Bournemouth caters for them years ago by providing the splendid links in Merrick Park.⁶⁹

Likewise, the Mayor of Weymouth added to this sentiment in support of a municipal course open to visitors by stating, '[it would] improve the attractiveness of Weymouth as a spa town'.⁷⁰ There was at this time, a small private golf course near Weymouth at East Chickwell that had been instituted in 1894.⁷¹ Yet, according to an 1897 article in *Golf*, the lack of a municipal course in Weymouth was very much to the detriment of the town. Indeed *Golf* suggested that the Town Council had 'failed to take the intelligent decision in providing a golf course for the visitors to the town, from whose pockets the life-blood of such a seaside resort must mainly come. The only possibility of playing the game [in Weymouth] was due to private enterprise'.⁷² This sentiment, from a neutral source, clearly demonstrates the benefits and supports the local desire to see the creation of a municipal course in Weymouth that would add an in-demand amenity and, more importantly, income to the town. With all this pressure, Weymouth Town Council in 1904 enlisted the Open Champion and the renowned golf course designer, J.H. Taylor, as their golf course architect to create a municipal course in the town. But, Taylor took the view that there was no land suitable for golf south of the Ridgeway and recommended the expansion of the existing Dorchester Club course on Cam Down from 9 to 18 holes. For Weymouth Town Council this location, although only some eight miles from Weymouth, was considered to be a significant barrier as the Dorchester Club

⁶⁸ Ward, *Came Down to Golf*, 14

⁶⁹ *Southern Times*, 4 February 1905

⁷⁰ Ward, *Came Down to Golf*, 15

⁷¹ Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country*, 20

⁷² *Golf*, 19 February 1897

was on land administered by a separate authority. The Weymouth Town Council was not authorised to spend money outside of the Town Council's boundaries.

Consequently, Weymouth Town Council lost interest in spending public funds on an amenity that would not solely benefit the local population as it could not guarantee that the majority of visitors it attracted would stay in Weymouth, rather than in the much closer and rival town of Dorchester.⁷³ Although the development of the Dorchester Club course took place, it remained a private members' course and was not widely open to the general public. Despite this development and the existence of the small course at East Chickwell, a group of Weymouth businessmen were still keen to have a more convenient links and formed The Weymouth Golf Syndicate and approached Taylor's rival, James Braid, to visit the town to give a second opinion. He disagreed with Taylor's assessment and identified an area of land in the town that was suitable for golf, and so he designed the new Weymouth GC, which opened in 1909.⁷⁴ However, this new club was also formed as a private club, not a municipal course, but in 1922 the club fell on hard times; membership had fallen post-World War One, and part of the course had been lost to food production. The Weymouth Town Council purchased the land to preserve the amenity and so, by default, less than twenty years after the initial concept, the town had its municipal course to compete with Bournemouth to provide visitors and locals with affordable and accessible golf. By this time, the green fees at Bournemouth's two municipal courses were almost half the cost to play on the trio of private courses in that town and lower than those charged at The Dorchester GC.⁷⁵ This acquisition was also timely, as in 1921 the Bournemouth Corporation had acquired further land from the Earl of Leven and Melville and had re-modelled the course at Meyrick Park to create a longer and more challenging course.⁷⁶ Weymouth Town Council felt that they had to respond if they wanted to attract visitors looking for affordable holiday golf and not risk losing revenue to their competitor along the coast.

⁷³ Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country*, 87-88

⁷⁴ Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country*, 134

⁷⁵ *Golf in the South*, 97, 113

⁷⁶ *Bournemouth Times*, 15 January 1921.

6.4 Brighton and Eastbourne – Sussex’s golfing rivals

Meanwhile, in Sussex, Cannadine explains how Brighton grew spectacularly as a holiday resort in the 1820s and 1830s and enjoyed another spurt of expansion in the decade after the railway arrived in the town. He adds how visitors could enjoy all of the necessary resort attractions, including, in the early 1900s, four private golf courses.⁷⁷ By 1915, the *Brighton and Hove Guide* lists five private courses in Brighton: Brighton & Hove GC, East Brighton GC, The Dyke GC, the separate Brighton and Hove Ladies GC, and finally the West Hove GC, opened in 1910.⁷⁸

Despite these riches, in 1907 the Borough of Brighton’s Parks, Golf Sub-Committee considered the financial merits of forming a municipal links within the town and resolved to lay out a 9-hole course on the downs overlooking the town.⁷⁹ Brighton’s choice of golfing expert to undertake this work was also J.H. Taylor, who produced a report as to the suitability of the land at Hollingbury Park for the formation of the course and an approximate estimate for the work.⁸⁰ Work on the course was carried out by the town’s unemployed. The cost of the work, which amounted to £902, was paid from the Mayor’s Distress Fund and a grant of £450 from the Local Government Board for the purpose.⁸¹ Hence, it could conceivably be hypothesised that this latter source of financial support further demonstrates the acceptance that a public golf course represented a justifiable venture for the investment of Governmental money. It was not considered to be merely providing another sporting facility for the wealthy. The course was officially opened by the Mayor, Alderman J.P. Slingsby Roberts, on Friday 11th September 1908 and an exhibition match followed the next day. Not all of the local reaction was positive; the *Brighton Gazette* reported that there was ‘a storm of indignation’ regarding the loss of public open space. The locals had previously enjoyed unfettered use of the park, and they considered that the laying out of the golf course to be an infringement on their rights. The newspaper under ‘Topics of the Day’ added that

⁷⁷ David Cannadine, *Lords and Landlords: The Aristocracy and Towns 1774-1967* (Leicester University Press 1980) 269

⁷⁸ 1915 Brighton and Hove Guide,

⁷⁹ Rosemary Milton, *A History of Ladies Golf in Sussex* (Sussex County Ladies Golf Association, 1993) 78; Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 17 June 1907

⁸⁰ Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 30 December 1907

⁸¹ Letter from Town Clerk Brighton to The Secretary, Local Government Board 8 March 1909

particular prominent residents proposed to challenge restriction and to undertake passive resistance by continuing to walk about the park, regardless of the playing of golf. This perspective was highlighted in the Mayor's speech, but he countered by emphasising the health benefits that the municipal golf course would provide for locals and how it would not only attract visitors but also, 'what else they brought [to the town] beside themselves.'⁸² Two further areas of concern demonstrate the depth of feeling raised in some residents. The first highlighted the risk that the playing of golf might bring, in what would today be called sensationalist headlines, when a local newspaper asked, 'how many innocent babes will be slaughtered by golf balls when the course is built?'⁸³ On the same subject, but less dramatic, it was feared that the flight of golf balls would startle many people more accustomed to using the park for peaceful activities.⁸⁴ The second point of anxiety questioned the engagement of the town's unemployed, the *Brighton Gazette* declared that, 'it was, poor form to drag in the unemployed into these golf fakes.' The term, golf fakes, was used as a disparaging and uncomplimentary one, implying that public golf courses were spurious and unnecessary. However, this was balanced by another contribution to the debate that considered the project a folly, but was glad to see fifty-three of the town's unemployed working there, earning much-needed wages.⁸⁵ A further public concern that was debated by the Committee was the question of Sunday play when it was reported, 'that persons had been seen playing early on Sunday mornings'. As a consequence, steps to prevent a recurrence were authorised.⁸⁶ The provision of municipal golf at Hollingbury was therefore not without its detractors.

The opening of the course was extensively promoted within the town on the instructions of the Sub-Committee, through a range of advertising material distributed to the hotels, shops and in prominent positions around the town's transport infrastructure.⁸⁷ This demonstrated that the Corporation, despite the objections to the new course, or perhaps

⁸² *Brighton Gazette*, 12 September 1908

⁸³ *Brighton Gazette*, 16 January 1908

⁸⁴ *Brighton Gazette*, 27 June 1908

⁸⁵ *Brighton Gazette*, 16 January 1908, 25 January 1908

⁸⁶ Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 29 September 1908

⁸⁷ Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 3 September 1908; 29 September 1908.

because of them, looked to ensure that those visiting the town were aware of the new public golf facilities and to encourage wider visitor patronage. This ease of access was re-enforced by the entry about the club in the *1908/09 Golfing Annual*. It emphasised the benefits in stating, ‘the course is situated in a magnificent position on the Downs overlooking Brighton. Electric trams run frequently within five minutes walk of the pavilion and course’.⁸⁸ According to the Town Clerk, the course proved to be a very popular attraction to the town and concerns were quickly raised about the likelihood of over-crowding when the summer arrived.⁸⁹ He suggested in a letter to the Local Government Board (LGB) that an extension to 18 holes would make it more popular with visitors and would increase revenue to cover any rise in costs.

The success of the course was further demonstrated when viewing the first year’s accounts that showed an income of £575 3s 9d against an expenditure of £457 3s 7d. This resulted in a surplus of over £117, which meant a significant contribution to the General District Rate fund.⁹⁰ The course was extended to 18-holes in 1910, but not before a public inquiry was held under the instruction of the LGB to allow the Corporation to amend the Brighton Corporation Act to permit them to purchase additional land and to convert it into recreational (golfing) land.⁹¹ Part of the evidence given was that although several private golf courses existed in Brighton, visitors preferred to play on a public course. This contrasted with the procedure required to play on a private course, whereby the visitor was required to go through the trouble of getting an official introduction from a local member or, more commonly, a letter of commendation from their own club’s secretary if they were a member.⁹² For some, this might have been difficult or impossible with tough access restrictions that were prevalent during the Edwardian period; however, this helps to suggest how municipal golf courses contributed to widening participation in golf in England, including those with lesser means. The *Brighton Gazette* added specific evidence to the economic benefit that visiting golfers brought when informing the readers that the course had

⁸⁸ *Golfing Annual 1908/09*, 207

⁸⁹ Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 25 January 1909.

⁹⁰ *Sussex Daily News*, 5 November 1909

⁹¹ Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 25 October 1909.

⁹² *Sussex Daily News*, 5 November 1909

taken £9 from visitors' green fees in each of the last three weeks.⁹³ According to the Sub-Committee's minutes, the opening of the extension of the links on 26th October 1910 was marked by an exhibition match with invitations sent to four of the leading professionals, including the course designer, J.H. Taylor and his great rival James Braid.⁹⁴ A subsequent minute entry reveals that Taylor and Braid were each paid £10 as their appearance fee. At the same sub-committee meeting, the members agreed that ladies would be permitted to play on the course on the Boxing Day Bank Holiday.⁹⁵ This last entry again represents the more liberal attitudes and the widening of golfing opportunities afforded to women at municipally-run golf courses. Finally, the progressive decision to provide a municipal course at Brighton was recognised with a poem by Ronald Ross which appeared in the 1910 edition of the *Golfing Annual*.⁹⁶ Ross was full of praise for the Corporation, the Saipan Fathers as he called them, in showing great foresight in creating a public golf course. In his opinion, the course was the finest of all the assets built in the town, 'the brightest gem in their civic crown'. This is a strong statement when one considers the presence of the Brighton Pavilion and the two pleasure piers that the town, the residents and the tourists enjoyed and demonstrates the importance that Ross felt the golfing opportunities offered for the town's reputation.

Hollingbury was the only course in Brighton that was originally constructed by the Corporation as a municipal course. However, there were two more courses, previously formed as private members' clubs which were taken over after World War Two by the Corporation and operated as additional civic attractions. These were Waterhall GC and the Dyke GC; the latter was closed and commandeered by the military in World War Two. After the war, the 163 acres of freehold land was acquired by Brighton Corporation who undertook a complete reconstruction of the course and provided a new

⁹³ *Brighton Gazette*, 2 October 1909; The relative income value of £9 in 1910 is worth £5,241 in 2018.

⁹⁴ Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 28 August 1910

⁹⁵ Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 19 December 1910

⁹⁶ *Golfing Annual 1909/10*, 93/94; Ronald Ross was a Nobel Prize in Medicine but who also had minor achievements were in the field of literature.

prefabricated clubhouse following the extensive damage inflicted as a consequence of the military training exercises.⁹⁷

In terms of local rivalry, Brighton and the neighbouring Sussex resort of Eastbourne were in keen competition to attract visitors from London and across the south-east. The towns had their different cultures as Beckett's 1912 guidebook describes Brighton as democratic, Hastings as salubrious but Eastbourne as being distinctly and decidedly elegant.⁹⁸ This elegance was a factor in the formation of the senior golf club in the town in 1886: The Royal Eastbourne GC and which was used by the aristocracy, before a second club, Willingdon, was added in 1898, which was chiefly used by the professional classes.⁹⁹ The provision of municipal golf to persuade holiday-makers has been highlighted as one of the key strategies used by corporations, and historians have often referred to the existence of a municipal course at Eastbourne.¹⁰⁰ This study presents evidence that the third club in Eastbourne was also created as a private members' club without assistance from the Corporation. When Eastbourne Downs GC was formed in 1908, the *Eastbourne Gazette* proudly stated that unlike other towns, specifically naming Brighton and Bournemouth, no ratepayer's money was spent on providing golf courses in Eastbourne. Instead, the club would be funded through selling £1 shares in a limited liability company. The article continued to highlight that the objective of the new course was to provide healthy recreation for visitors and residents alike.¹⁰¹ This can be interpreted as a disparaging remark and intended to convey civic superiority over Brighton. Records show that the land on which Eastbourne Downs GC was located had been leased from the Davis-Gilbert Estate, one of the major benefactors of the town, to the newly-incorporated Eastbourne Downs Golf Links Co. Ltd. who, in turn, let the clubhouse and the course to the club.¹⁰² The original lessor, Carew Davies Gilbert, died in December 1913, but his estate passed to his daughter.¹⁰³ A Share

⁹⁷ Milton, *A History of Ladies Golf in Sussex*, 76; Clifford Allen Stuart, *The Dyke Golf Club 1906-2000*, (Burgess Hill: Forms Management Ltd, 2000), 5

⁹⁸ The Beckett: Eastbourne Pictorial 1912

⁹⁹ *Sussex Life*, August 1982, 30-31

¹⁰⁰ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 37

¹⁰¹ *Eastbourne Gazette*, 28 January 1908

¹⁰² John Surtees, *Eastbourne's Story* (SB Publications, 2005) 39; *Eastbourne Gazette*, 7 August 1909

¹⁰³ N. Whitefield-Smith, *Eastbourne: A History and Celebration* (Salisbury: Frith Book Company, 2004)

Certificate, dated 13th July 1914 certifies that Minnie Davies-Gilbert of Manor House, Eastbourne owned fifty x £1 shares in the Eastbourne Downs Golf Links Company, which is further evidence of the private rather than public status of the club.¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, the existence of three golf clubs in Eastbourne added to the reputation of the town as a golfing centre and so many people headed to the town, staying in the Eastbourne Hotels which were keen to run golfing breaks.¹⁰⁵

Having defined the formation and original ownership of the club, in the late 1920s, the then landowner, Commander Walter Raleigh Gilbert was keen to sell the land. This was highly typical in the inter-war years where many of the landowning aristocracies were under attack and in retreat, frequently being forced to sell-off land as a result of a combination of death duties, crippling taxes and declining farm rentals.¹⁰⁶ Brandon in *The South Downs* notes how alarmed the people of Eastbourne were with this prospect; it prompted the Corporation to press for the 1926 Eastbourne Corporation Act to purchase 4,000 acres of Downlands to prevent it from being developed for housing, as had occurred along the Sussex coast at Newhaven.¹⁰⁷ The purchase included the land incorporating the famous Beachy Head and the Belle Tote lighthouse, and the Duke of York praised the Corporation's action in 1929 as a national service.¹⁰⁸ The total cost of the land purchase was £91,291 1s 7d, and the sum was raised by a public subscription that allowed the Corporation to purchase the land on behalf of Eastbourne residents for them to enjoy in perpetuity.¹⁰⁹ According to conveyancing records, £9,800 of ratepayers' money was spent on acquiring the Gilbert-Davies parcel of land that included the Eastbourne Downs Golf Course and four neighbouring farms.¹¹⁰ This was a sizeable investment to purchase a public amenity, including a golf course, and some thought that the Corporation would soon seek to turn the club into a municipal course.

¹⁰⁴ East Sussex Record Office, Archive of the Davis-Gilbert Family of Eastbourne,

¹⁰⁵ Milton, *A History of Royal Eastbourne Golf Club*, 74

¹⁰⁶ Cannadine, *Lords and Landlords*, 422

¹⁰⁷ Peter Brandon, *The South Downs* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1998), 170

¹⁰⁸ Robert Armstrongs, *Guide to Eastbourne* (Eastbourne: Sound Forum, 1984), 124; Brandon, *The South Downs*, 173

¹⁰⁹ H.W. Fovargue, *Municipal Eastbourne 1883-1933, Selections from the Proceedings of the Town Council* (Eastbourne, 1933)

¹¹⁰ East Sussex Record Office, Archive of the Davis-Gilbert Family of Eastbourne,

However, the only impact for the golf club was that it had a new landlord in the Corporation, but the Eastbourne Downs Golf Links Co. Ltd. was still in place, now holding the land on license from the Corporation.¹¹¹ This change might explain why in some literature it has been thought that the course was a municipal provision. This transition to some form of Corporation involvement did not adversely impact on the allowance of Sunday play on the course. Indeed, in 1927 they agreed to the ending of the restriction on the use of caddies for Sunday play.¹¹² Traditionally, most private courses had allowed Sunday play, whereas corporation-run municipal courses prevented it. The use of caddies on Sundays was also contentious in that it meant the caddies were working on a Sunday, a practice that was also at odds with accepted custom and practice, particularly as many of the caddies were young people that society wanted to protect from forms of exploitation. Despite this continued independence, the golf club struggled to pay their rent to the Company through the 1930s. In 1938 a solution was reached after negotiations with the Corporation and the club bought out the Company for £1,200 and agreed to take a 28-year lease from the Corporation on very favourable terms.¹¹³ Hence, the club became one step closer to being considered a municipal. Following World War Two, like many other clubs, the Downs Club got into more financial problems in the late 1940s and 1950s which forced Eastbourne Corporation to help them out again through a series of grants and to waive the rent for several years.¹¹⁴ The Eastbourne Downs golf course has certainly endured a demanding existence, frequently being close to bankruptcy and only surviving due to the generosity of the Corporation. Throughout these challenges, it has been popular within the local community, and it occupies a prominent location with stunning views across the Downs and over the town. It has played an essential role in protecting the landscape from the threat of development and urbanisation. Together with the Royal and Willingdon Clubs it has attracted golfing visitors to the town for over a century.

¹¹¹ Willcocks, *The Story of Eastbourne Downs*, 38

¹¹² Willcocks, *The Story of Eastbourne Downs*, 37

¹¹³ Willcocks, *The Story of Eastbourne Downs*, 47

¹¹⁴ Willcocks, *The Story of Eastbourne Downs*, 55

6.5 Portsmouth and Southsea – an ideal winter resort

Portsmouth is one of the largest cities on the South Coast of England, and it is best known for being the home of the Royal Navy rather than a holiday destination.

Portsmouth was designated as a Royal Dockyard by Henry VII in the late fifteenth century with the first recorded dry dock in the world built there in 1496. The following year, the dockyard launched its first warship, the 80-ton *Sweepstake*, commencing the city's long association with the Royal Navy.¹¹⁵ In terms of sporting history, it was the city's football team, rather than any golfing pedigree, for which the city was more renowned. Indeed, the provision of a municipal golf course was a relatively late addition to Portsmouth's inventory of built amenities offering holiday-makers an alternative form of entertainment. It complemented the natural feature of Southsea beach with its swimming and sunbathing opportunities. (Figure 6.1)



Figure 6.1: Southsea an Ideal Winter Resort

(*The Times*, 25 September 1916)

Earlier built amenities included two pleasure piers, Clarence Pier formed in 1861 and South Parade Pier constructed in 1879. Both piers also served as steamer jetties for passenger ferries to the Isle of Wight and around the Solent, before they became popular places for visitors to promenade along during their stay. Later, an assortment of theatres and amusement rides were added to widen their attraction as the demand for active entertainment increased.¹¹⁶ A private body, the Southsea and Portsmouth Entertainment Committee was formed in 1906 and were initially responsible for the management and

¹¹⁵ Sarah Quail, *Portsmouth: A History and Celebration* (Salisbury: The Francis Firth, Collection, 2005), 46

¹¹⁶ Sarah Quail, *Southsea Past* (Chichester: Phillimore & Co. Ltd, 2000), 43, 46

development of the holiday infrastructure in Southsea. However, as Quail notes, considerable municipal effort went into developing Southsea as a holiday destination post-World War One, when in the 1920s all the Committee's assets and amenities were taken over by Portsmouth Corporation, including all the sports facilities. These included the canoe lake, tennis courts, bowling greens and a miniature golf course.¹¹⁷

Once the Corporation assumed the responsibility for driving the development, they were able to use their greater resources and added large-scale assets to the portfolio. This meant the purchase of land, including the privately-owned Great Salterns Estate on the eastern side of Portsea Island, which was allocated for use as a public park and recreational use.¹¹⁸ In common with other corporations, Portsmouth engaged one of the period's leading golf course architects and employed H.S. Colt to design their course for a fee of 100 guineas and 200 more to supervise the work.¹¹⁹ Work progressed satisfactorily, although as Colt wrote in a report to the Committee, the land at Great Salterns was very wet, and the original budget of £8,000 required an additional £2,000 for more drainage.¹²⁰ This considerable investment of public money was partly mitigated as a large number of local unemployed undertook the works. Colt later described how his design, 'did not make the start of the course too difficult and did not include too many hazards, but still made the holes interesting and enjoyable, even for the worstplayers'.¹²¹ This was a key consideration for a municipal course that would naturally attract less accomplished and more occasional golfers. The course was opened on 14th July 1926; it had initially been planned for 23rd June, but this date clashed with the Open Championship. It would have reduced the potential for publicity, certainly in the national press, which the Corporation would have desired for a facility aimed at attracting visitors to the city.¹²² The original date would also have prevented the appearance of George Duncan (1920 Open Champion), who was playing in the Open at Royal Lytham. Duncan helped celebrate the opening of the new Great Salterns course with a pair of exhibition matches on the day against local professional players, as was

¹¹⁷ Quail, *Portsmouth: A History and Celebration*, 97

¹¹⁸ Portsmouth Council minutes, 25 October 1921

¹¹⁹ Portsmouth Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee minutes, 3 Nov 1922

¹²⁰ Portsmouth Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee minutes, 6 Apr 1923

¹²¹ Portsmouth Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee minutes, 24 August 1925

¹²² Portsmouth Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee minutes, 18 May 1926

the custom for the opening of a course. The *Portsmouth Evening News* reported that Cllr J.W. Perkins, Chair of the Parks Committee, told the large crowd that had assembled to watch the exhibition matches that the development of the course was particularly important for the city. Apart from the dockyard, there were no major industries in the city and the city's wealth was dependant on attracting visitors to holiday there. Cllr Perkins added, 'that golf had become a popular game for visitors and the Corporation recognised that the provision of a golf course was a necessity for, an up to date holiday resort and the investment, which had attracted some local opposition, would come back in many ways'.¹²³ This speech shows how keen the Corporation was to inform the local ratepayers that they were practising Municipal Capitalism in their strategic planning and investment policies for the long-term gain of the city and the population. The newspaper account also noted that many of the crowds had driven to the course using the newly constructed Eastern Road which demonstrates another example, and an early benefit to the locals, of the Corporation's investment by upgrading the transport infrastructure in the city.

Another example of forward planning and utilisation of existing assets was that the Corporation had resolved to use the Great Salterns Mansion, situated adjacent to the new course, as a clubhouse facility for local and visiting players. This, as Vamplew argues, was another vital component of physical capital that a golf links required.¹²⁴ The Mansion House was an elegant Georgian property; its existence is first recorded in 1830 and it was sold with the estate to Portsmouth Corporation in 1920 for £41,000.¹²⁵ This provided all golfers with a vital place to change and store equipment, one that added to the physical attraction of the course given its architectural grandeur and would have been an upgrade over the facilities of most of the competing course's clubhouse provision. The Corporation was quick to capitalise on this when promoting the new golf facilities in the annual city guide, stating that, 'there was a Mansion fitted as a

¹²³ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 15 July 1926

¹²⁴ Wray Vamplew, 'Concepts of Capital: An Approach Shot to the History of the British Golf Club before 1914', *Journal of Sport History* 39, no. 2 (2012): 299-331

¹²⁵ J.Ainsworth, *Great Salterns: A Brief History 1600-1983* (1374 – Portsmouth History Centre); Portsmouth Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee minutes, 19 March 1926

clubhouse with every comfort', before proclaiming if somewhat debatable given the stiff competition, 'nowhere on the South Coast are there such facilities as provided by the [Portsmouth] Corporation and that they offer for visitors the cheapest [golf] on the South Coast at just, 1s 3d a round or 7s 6d for a weekly ticket'.¹²⁶ It is also important to note that in the summer of 1930, the Parks Committee approved a request to allow the serving of public refreshments from the Mansion House and at the same meeting they resolved to change the name of the course from Great Salterns Golf Course to Portsmouth City Golf Course.¹²⁷ These two decisions are important as they show how, from a marketing perspective, using the name of the city in the title would be advantageous in attracting more visitors who might otherwise not know the location of Great Salterns and, secondly, being able to cater for them with refreshments once they ventured to the course.

It has previously been observed that to maximise the benefit and appeal of seaside resort golf it had to be as accessible as possible, and this included the opportunity to play on seven days a week, including Sundays. For the local corporations that had invested into municipal golf, this was particularly important as it meant that weekend breaks were more attractive and viable for visitors, and so provided greater and faster returns on their investment. However, as Lowerson had established, this was still a contentious issue with some elements of society, particularly on religious grounds.¹²⁸ Therefore, not surprisingly, the Corporation resolved to open the course for Sunday play when establishing the local rules for the course.¹²⁹ This decision, however, met with a predictable backlash and protests with seventeen local Sunday Schools, the Portsmouth and District Free Church and over 300 citizens petitioning the Corporation against the policy.

As a consequence, the matter was debated by the Corporation again where Cllr Hooper put the case for retaining Sunday play. He stated that, in his opinion 'fitness [was] next to godliness!' and it was unfair to ratepayers who had funded the course not to collect fees on a Sunday and that the Council should take a broader view. Furthermore, he

¹²⁶ 1927 Portsmouth and Southsea Guide, 85-87

¹²⁷ Portsmouth Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee minutes, 3 June 1930

¹²⁸ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle classes*, 268

¹²⁹ Portsmouth Council minutes, 9 July 1926

added the members ought to treat the golf course alone and on its merits and not to mix it (a decision on Sunday opening) with other public grounds, by implication football. Interestingly, the *Portsmouth Evening News* observed that the subsequent vote on the matter was hung and it was on the Mayor's casting vote that the matter was referred to the Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee to resolve.¹³⁰ The Committee proposed a compromise solution with revised Sunday opening hours to be from 1.30 pm, and this was almost unanimously endorsed when the matter was returned to the full Council.¹³¹ Five years later, the decision was reviewed again after a request from the golf club for the practice of all-day Sunday golf to be allowed, but with the predictable outcome that the city's religious groups protested once again to the Corporation. However this time, in addition to those opposing the policy, there was a letter in support of Sunday play from the Chairman of the Southsea Hotels, Boarding Houses and Restaurant Keepers Association.¹³² This particular letter of support represents clear evidence that local businesses recognised the financial benefits associated with extending the golfing weekend to two days and how it would directly increase their trading fortunes. This request must be considered in the broader context of the 1932 Sunday Entertainments Act. Although more specifically related to the opening of cinemas, museums, picture galleries, zoological or botanical gardens or aquariums, it did represent a sea-change in public opinion. It gave local authorities permission to permit and regulate the opening and use of places on Sundays for certain entertainments.

Further evidence of support was demonstrated in the letters page of the local paper. It related the debate to the socio-economic status of those who wanted to play golf, but who could not afford to join any of the private golf clubs that were open for play on Sundays. These clubs were not restricted by municipal regulations but were managed by the rich and powerful members who demanded their Sunday morning round and

¹³⁰ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 15 September 1926

¹³¹ Portsmouth Council minutes, 11 Jan 1927

¹³² Portsmouth Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee minutes, 18 April 1932; Portsmouth Council minutes, 10 May 1932.

dictated the clubs' hours of play accordingly.¹³³ The Parks Committee finally brought this matter to a close when they voted seven to three to impose no restrictions on Sunday games and to bring the golf course operation in-line with all other days.¹³⁴ The lateness of the decision, November, is shown in the *1934 Portsmouth and Southsea Guide* with the note that, 'Sunday golf is at present under consideration' but is confirmed in the *1935 Guide* when weekly tickets, valid for 7-days a week, were available for £3 and 3s.¹³⁵ This meant that finally the Portsmouth Golf course could be advertised as an attractive proposition for those weekend visiting golfers who wanted to maximise the leisure time playing on the city's municipal course.

Although the city's population expanded between the wars, the evidence presented here shows that, while some ratepayers objected to the idea of Council spending their money on a rich man's game, there were successful arguments made, for very different reasons, to invest in municipal golf in Portsmouth.¹³⁶ The main objection was concerning the permission to play sport on a Sunday, but the motive to provide municipal golf was heavily influenced by developing the tourist offer to make Portsmouth more attractive to the lucrative holiday trade.

6.6 Conclusion

Instances of Municipal Entrepreneurialism clearly existed on the South Coast, as the research suggests that several towns and cities regarded municipal golf courses and the related events as a good investment for a range of outcomes. These included examples of destinations attracting new visitors to their towns and increasing secondary spend in the town's businesses, especially the hotels, restaurants, bars and the other attractions for the non-golfing members of the holidaying family. These motives to invest in municipal golf were often encouraged by local rivalry and the desire to ensure that the corporation was providing the amenities that were demanded by the increasingly mobile and discerning tourist. Corporations were always keen to promote themselves widely; this can be evidenced by the promotion of the inaugural Meyrick Park Open Amateur

¹³³ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 27 Oct 1933

¹³⁴ Portsmouth Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries Committee minutes, 20 November, 1933

¹³⁵ 1934 Portsmouth & Southsea Guide, 77; 1935 Portsmouth & Southsea Guide, 95

¹³⁶ Cairns, *No Tie Required*, 197

Competition across fifty railway stations spanning the major urban centres in Britain. Later the protection of open space became a motive for certain corporations' commitments, as at Eastbourne, but the relationship with tourism was still recognised in this occurrence.

Objections to the concept of Municipal Capitalism were not significantly recorded; there were concerns about the investment of public money in what was considered to be a rich man's sport, certainly when the location was outside of the corporation's area, as at Weymouth. The loss of long-established public rights or traditions was the other significant protests that were voiced, most notably at Brighton. Whereas when the corporation invested in acquiring land, including an existing golf course, for conservation reasons, as at Eastbourne, there was widespread support. While these objections were based on a physical cost in terms of the loss of access to public open space, other complaints were societal concerning the loss of the observance of the Sabbath. This was most significantly identified as an issue at Portsmouth, but golfers at Bournemouth and Brighton also faced resistance and restrictions when wanting to play on a Sunday. This chapter has shown that Municipal Capitalism benefited the population of the South Coast, be they golfers or hoteliers. It was a significant factor in the creation, or in some cases the adoption, of several public golf courses from Weymouth to Eastbourne, which by the inter-war years provided seaside golf for an increasing number and as they were more affordable for a different kind of visitor. Once these municipal courses became established, several benefits derived from this investment for the resorts. The most significant was the hosting of Golf Weeks designed to encourage the golfing tourist to visit the seaside courses after reading about the tournaments in the golfing and national press. This topic is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Hosting Golf Events: a Benefit of Municipal Golf on the South Coast

7. Hosting Golf Events: A Benefit of Municipal Golf on the South Coast

‘I find that golfers, like fishermen, like to chat about their experiences and if a visitor were able to go back to his club-mate and show them by means of a plan of the course where he pulled his drive or how he chipped onto a green – to say nothing of his super shots, it would be a good advertisement of the course and Bournemouth.’¹

‘The club had done a good deal for the advertising of Brighton, especially in its organisation of Brighton Open Golf Week which is advertised all over the country.’²

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an insight into the multiple factors that motivated local corporations to invest resources into the development of public municipal golf courses. In some cases, despite the clear and distinct challenges to this policy in terms of physical, fiscal and social barriers, municipal golf courses became established. They frequently succeeded in meeting the corporations’ objectives of providing new and popular amenities that attracted new segments of tourists into the towns and cities on the South Coast. This topic is now developed and outlines a specific outcome that the development of these courses provided: the organisation and hosting of a variety of golf events that were played on the municipal courses. While these were popular with the local golfers, they also attracted considerable numbers of golf tourists who journeyed to compete. These golfing tourists would stay in the local hotels and spend money in the resort during their visit contributing to the local economy, thus fulfilling another of the aims of the corporation and providing a return on their original financial investment. Bournemouth therefore undertook and benefited from what is known today as place branding. It built on Aaker’s brand equity theory, a set of assets linked to a brand which adds value to the product.³ Ritchie and Ritchie later applied this theory to tourism and strategies such as ‘I love New York’.⁴ These place branding campaigns help to build

¹ Major T.V. Rebbeck, Chair of the Tournaments Committee, *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 18 May 1936

² *Brighton and Hove Herald*, 12 November 1932

³ David Aaker, *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name* (New York: The Free Press), 27

⁴ J. R. Brent Ritchie and Robin J.B. Ritchie, ‘The branding of tourism destination: Past achievements and future challenges.’ (paper presented at the Annual Congress of the International Association of Scientific experts in tourism. Marrakech, Morocco 1998)

awareness and create an image of quality, for which tourists are willing to pay extra to experience.

The hosting of professional tournaments and amateur Golf Weeks in these resorts is discussed, to demonstrate how they increased demand for and further broadened the nature of golfing participation, by helping to break down the traditional social and cultural barriers associated with the game. To help achieve this, an analysis of the participants in the men's section of the Bournemouth Amateur Open Golf Tournaments between 1936 and 1939 was undertaken. The records for these four years revealed the magnitude and the nationwide scope of the geographic origins of the golfing tourists. A socio-economic analysis of the occupation, class and the age of the visiting players identifies that they were broadly representative of the typical 1930s club golfer. Interestingly, some advances in terms of class and gender participation were present amongst the golf tourists who visited Bournemouth. Finally, the chapter illustrates how the media reported on the tournaments to promote golf and in particular Bournemouth as a golfing holiday destination. The extensive use of newspaper reports will demonstrate how these events added to the local economy and the town's golfing reputation.

7.2 Professional Exhibition Matches and Tournaments and Amateur Competitions

Previously Chapters Two and Three showed how the enablers and motivators of golf tourism were essential contributors to the popularisation and accessibility of golf tourism, particularly on a casual and individual basis. However, more formal and mass-market approaches include the organisation of exhibition matches and professional golf tournaments for the passive golfer tourist to spectate, or the hosting of local open golf tournaments for amateur players to enter. All three of these golfing events were widely utilised to boost the awareness of the municipal courses and, consequently, they each played an important role in increasing the number of tourists visiting the towns.

Firstly under consideration is the hosting of celebrity exhibition matches between the leading players of the day and frequently the local club professional. Vamplew

highlights the value of these matches as they were almost always assured coverage in the golfing press and so provided free advertising across the primary target market.⁵ It was also a case of mutual benefit, as for the professional these exhibition matches were an important source of income, often playing three times as many exhibition matches to every tournament. The reigning Open Champion, in particular, could expect to receive a series of invitations during his year as the Champion Golfer.⁶ The opening of a course, as discussed in the previous chapter, was often an opportunity to heighten awareness and encourage the golfing tourist to follow in the footsteps or divots of the great players. The value to this was twofold: firstly charging an entrance fee to watch the golf (although at Bournemouth's Queen's Park this was not permitted as it was designated as a public open space with free access for spectators); secondly, to encourage future visits through witnessing the endeavours first-hand or reading about the matches in the local and national press.⁷ Some examples of these exhibition matches included the match between J.H. Taylor and Horace Hutchinson on the occasion of the opening of Meyrick Park in 1894 and the Braid and Taylor contest, playing with two other leading professionals in the exhibition match held for the opening of the extension to 18-holes at Hollingbury, Brighton in 1910.⁸ Bournemouth linked their 1931 Golf Week for amateur players with a high profile exhibition match that included the six-time winner of the Open Championship, Harry Vardon, and the local Dorset professionals Charles and Ernest Whitcombe and Archie Compston. The latter three players were all placed in the Open Championship during the 1920s and 1930s, and this helped to ensure that a large crowd attended the match, keen to witness how the professionals fared on the course. This was demonstrated by the inclusion of images from the 1931 match in the combined promotional programme produced for the 1932 exhibition match and the amateur open events. Also included was a notice that all spectators would be charged an admission fee

⁵ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, p24

⁶ Holt, Lewis and Vamplew, *The PGA 1901-2001*, 37

⁷ Vamplew, *Not Playing the Game*, 66

⁸ *Golf*, 7 December 1894; Brighton Parks (Golf Links Sub-Committee) minutes, 28 August 1910

Hosting Golf Events.

of 2s. 6d. to watch leading professional golfers play their match at Meyrick Park on Wednesday 27 April.⁹ (Figure 7.1)

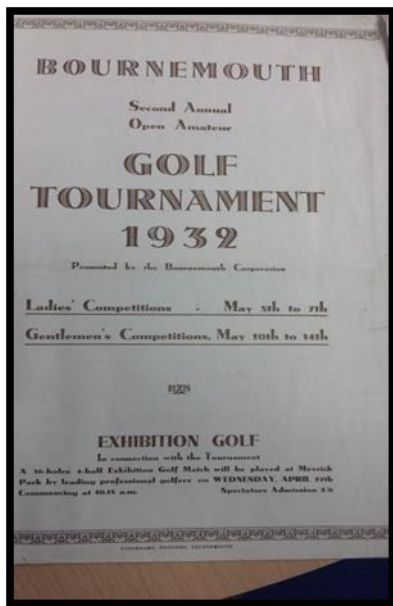


Figure 7.1: 1932 Bournemouth Open Programme
(Bournemouth Library Heritage Zone, U769.935)

Without any restrictions on charging fees at Meyrick Park, the Corporation was able to collect extra revenue in addition to promoting the golfing opportunities Bournemouth had to offer.

The second way in which the passive golf tourist was attracted was when a town used the enticement of holding a professional golf tournament. An example of this is when Bournemouth hosted the prestigious *Daily Mail* Golf Tournament at Queen's Park Golf Course, in March 1939. This included over one hundred of the leading players of the day and the winner, three-time Open winner, Henry Cotton, collected a prize of £500 after five days of closely fought competition with Archie Compston. This figure was five times the amount Dick Burton received for winning The Open at St Andrews the same year.¹⁰ The *Bournemouth Evening Echo* reported accounts of each day's play, including some large photographic images of the leading players on the paper's front page, together with claims that a crowd of 5,000 was present to watch the final two

⁹ *Bournemouth Second Annual Open Amateur Golf Tournament 1932 Programme*, Bournemouth Library Heritage Zone, U769.935

¹⁰ Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country*, 126

rounds of play on the Friday.¹¹ Unfortunately for Bournemouth, any medium-term promotional benefits from the reporting of this epic contest were countered by the start of World War Two just five months after the end of the tournament, which put a stop to golf tourism in England for the next six years. In hindsight, it is ironic that the report of the golf tournament was on the same page as news of the launch, by Adolf Hitler, of the German battleship Tirpitz.¹² The news of this warship, and the war more specifically, would occupy the pages of the newspapers over the coming years, replacing reports on golf tournaments and holiday destinations.

Finally, to cater to the active golf tourist, the organisation of open amateur tournaments was an effective and popular way to attract higher numbers of participants. In 1922 a golf competition was included as part of the Brighton Carnival Week. It was advertised as a 36-hole event over two days and was played on the Hollingbury GC and the East Brighton links with an entrance fee of 5s. The winner of the event received £15, and there were smaller cash prizes for places and daily winners.¹³ This further shows the importance that corporations attached to these types of events to attract golfing visitors into the town, and how Brighton combined it with the carnival festivities to maximise the impact and appeal of the marketing. This policy was specifically recognised by the Mayor of Brighton in 1932 when speaking at the annual dinner of the Hollingbury Park GC. Mayor Frank G. Beal informed the members that, ‘The club had done a good deal for the advertising of Brighton, especially in its organisation of Brighton Open Golf Week which is advertised all over the country’.¹⁴

It was not only Brighton that hosted this form of Open amateur tournament. At Meyrick Park, the Bournemouth Corporation recognised the benefits of these competitions from the beginning when the Town Mayor announced, before the course was even opened, that he would present a silver cup, the Russell-Cotes Challenge Cup, to the Corporation

¹¹ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 31 March 1939

¹² *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 31 March 1939

¹³ Brighton Carnival Week Golf Competition 1922 Poster

¹⁴ *Brighton and Hove Herald*, 12 November 1932

to be played for annually.¹⁵ The Council minutes subsequently show that a summer meeting under the auspices of the Corporation was held on 18-20 June 1895. The committee agreed to spend a total of £60 on prizes with £10 awarded to the winner of the Challenge Cup. Advertisements for the competition were inserted in the national periodical *Golf* for the three months before June 1895. This form of early sponsorship or even place-branding was rewarded with twenty-six entrants in the first year, and the inaugural winner of the Challenge Cup was a Mr A.C. Young.¹⁶ Place branding is thought to boost tourism, attract investment and boost morale among local people.¹⁷ In addition to the Challenge Cup, the competition notice provides a further sign of the early recognition of inclusiveness, and the widening of participation, with evidence of a ladies' event. This was free to enter and open to members of all golf clubs, with a first prize offered as £5.¹⁸ The *Bournemouth Guardian* records that two ladies tied on 66, and so a play-off was required to declare a Miss Fryer as the victor. However, the loser, Mrs Young, had the consolation prize of winning the handicap competition.¹⁹ The following year, the Corporation continued to organise the event, again advertising it in *Golf* magazine on four occasions, before holding the second annual golf meeting on 2-5 May 1896. This time, thirteen players competed for the Russell Cotes Challenge Cup and a further thirty-eight for a second trophy, the Leven Challenge Cup. The Earl of Leven and Melville presented this trophy, but under the condition that it was restricted to amateurs from Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset. The entrance fee for both men's events was 2s. 6d. delivering further sources of golfing income, but the prize money was reduced to £5. The ladies' event retained the first prize of £5, but still no fee was required to enter this competition.²⁰ By 1903 the event was being organised by the Meyrick Park GC as part of their Spring Meeting, and in 1909 it was played at Queen's Park course and hosted by the Meyrick Park and Queen's Park Club, which was formed in 1905 when the latter course was established and allowed members to play on both

¹⁵ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 12 October 1894

¹⁶ Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 19 April 1895; *Bournemouth Guardian*, 22 June 1895

¹⁷ Ayantunji Gbadamosi, *Contemporary Issues in Marketing* (London: Sage, 2019), 364

¹⁸ Jenkins, *Golf in Hardy Country*, 39

¹⁹ *Bournemouth Guardian*, 22 June 1895

²⁰ *Golf*, 24 January 1896; Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 6 March 1896; 13 April 1896

courses. According to the notice in the *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, the rules for entering the Leven Cup were unchanged and open to members from golf clubs in Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire. Thus it still encouraged visiting golfers to Bournemouth to compete against the local members on one of the town's municipal courses.²¹

By the 1930s these events had expanded but were once again being promoted by Bournemouth Corporation. They now constituted the Bournemouth Golfing Week, and the Second Annual Tournament was held in 1932 from 5 until 14 May with competitions advertised for men and ladies with events held on the town's two municipal courses. The number of events had expanded to five events for women over three days and seven for men over the following five days with matches organised for single and pairs competitions.²² Interestingly, the prize money had not advanced since the 1890s, with £5 5s. being the largest prize on offer, but the winners were also presented with replica cups. Significantly, local hotels and trade organisations presented a number of the new cups and suggested that the local establishments were not only keen to be associated with the Golfing Week, but they saw the direct marketing opportunities it offered to this critical market segment. Newspaper accounts of the week's events provide evidence that many visiting golfers were present, and some were victorious. Under the title Municipal Golf, the headline for 5 May 1932 states 'Chamber of Trade Cup Goes to a Visitor', and identifies that a Miss J. Lashmore, from Rothley Park GC, Leicester, beat a field of sixty entrants. Further proof is shown at the prize-giving when the Mayor congratulated the victorious ladies and expressed the hope that the numerous competitors, especially the visitors, had been pleased with the condition of the links.²³ The popularity of the Golfing Week is demonstrated by how in 1932 it attracted a total of 413 participants, up from 306 in the inaugural event in 1931.²⁴ The broader motives, beyond simply sporting competition, for hosting this tournament were

²¹ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 29 April 1903, 20 April 1909.

²² Bournemouth Second Annual Open Amateur Golf Tournament 1932 Programme,

²³ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 5 May 1932, 9 May 1932

²⁴ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 16 May 1932

also apparent within the programme's text, which styled Bournemouth as an ideal golfing holiday destination:

Bournemouth has 1000 acres of parks and gardens and unrivalled entertainment. Book the dates and spend a golfing holiday amidst [the] charming surroundings. The Manager will be delighted to send you the Bournemouth guidebook and hotel list and to assist prospective visitors to the tournaments to secure hotel accommodation.²⁵

7.3 The 1936-1939 Bournemouth Open Amateur Golf Tournaments

The Bournemouth Open Amateur Golf Tournament continued to hold an essential place in the town's sporting calendar in the closing years of the 1930s, attracting over a thousand entrants in the period 1936-1939. A case study approach has been adopted to gain a detailed understanding of the participants for these four years for the Men's Meeting as recorded in the surviving register of entries. The register, preserved in the archives of the Bournemouth Golf Alliance, includes the full A-Z list of entrants by year, their home address, parent golf club, handicap, which of the seven golf competitions they entered and the entry fees paid.²⁶ Regrettably, the similar records for the ladies' competitions covering their four events have not survived to enable a similar comparison study to be undertaken. This would have made for a fascinating and unique insight into this segment of golfing tourists in isolation and separate from the men's records. Details of men's golf, while still somewhat limited, have undoubtedly been more frequently recorded in historical studies of golf membership and participation than they have been for women.

In addition to the register of entries, the programme for the Ninth Open Amateur Tournament will be used to provide further evidence to explore and illustrate the size of the event and its great importance to the town of Bournemouth, the courses, hotels and businesses that sought to benefit from the annual golf tournament. The Ninth Open Amateur Tournament was played in 1939 on 26-27 May for ladies and from the 8-13 May for men. (Figure 7.2)

²⁵ Bournemouth Second Annual Open Amateur Golf Tournament 1932 Programme

²⁶ Bournemouth Golf Tournament: Register of Entries for Men's Meeting, Bournemouth Golf Alliance Archive

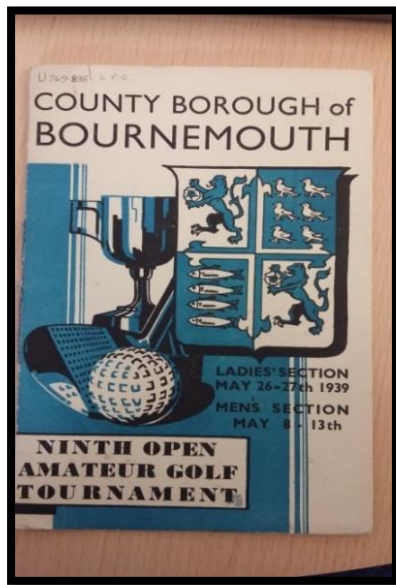


Figure 7.2: 1939 Bournemouth Open Programme

(Bournemouth Library Heritage Zone, U769.835)

As can be seen from the dates, the events were held across different weeks and thus increased the period when the competing golfers were visiting the town, and so would benefit the hotels and businesses catering for them over this extended time-frame. To promote the tournament, the Borough produced a thirty-two-page brochure, which included all the necessary golf-related information: details of the various competitions being staged, entry fees, rules, the prize money on offer and maps of the courses and the town. (Figure 7.3)

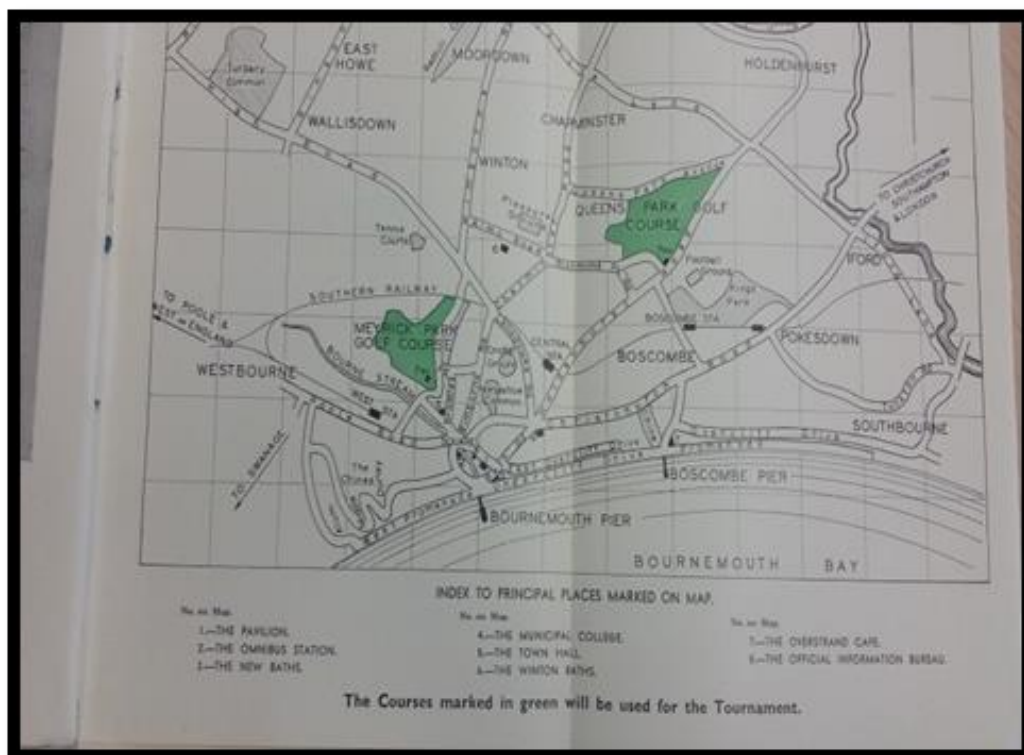


Figure 7.3: Locations of Bournemouth Golf Courses

(Bournemouth Library Heritage Zone, U769.835)

Entry forms for the various ladies’ and men’s competitions were included employing two tear-out forms that entrants were required to complete and send, together with appropriate fees, to the Honorary Secretary of the Bournemouth Golf Tournament at the Town Hall, Bournemouth. Complementing these details, there was copious information provided for the visiting golfer and any accompanying family members. This included a list of local hotels, that were often described as being ideal for golfers, adverts for local department stores and full-page features on both municipal courses’ golf professional. Finally, also included was a directory of Sports and Games in Bournemouth and a schedule of the year’s Coming (Arts and Sports) Events.

Additional paid-for advertisements that would have covered some of the programme production costs were for golf ball manufacturers and insurance companies. The Southern Railway’s *Golf in the South* was also promoted at the cost of 1s. to stimulate further the interest for the roving golfer who might be keen to explore further courses within the region over the summer. Finally, images of the town’s natural and municipally-built facilities, including the Bournemouth Pavilion, the indoor-bowls green and the beach, were present and, together with the textual information,

represented a thorough holiday guide for the town. The programme was produced sufficiently early in the year as it also promoted the hosting of the finals of the *Daily Mail* Professional Golf Tournament that would be held at the Queens Park course on 29-31 March 1939, with a total prize-money of £2,000. Combining these two golfing events and the details of the wider sporting events was a clever piece of marketing on behalf of the corporation, providing multiple marketing opportunities to appeal to golfers interested in spectating or playing, or both.²⁷ The format of the seven men's competitions comprised of a mix of singles, pairs and one mixed event. Local organisations sponsored two of the events which were: the Rotary Club, the Licensed Hotels and Restaurants Association and a third, the main event of the meeting, was the County Borough of Bournemouth Challenge Cups; one for the Scratch score and the other for the best handicap score. The winners of all three of these competitions received a replica cup as their prize, the runners-up and winners of the other four events won cash prizes (Table 7.1). In 1939 the total prize money presented was £55 13s. In contrast, the income in entry fees for the same year was only £13 13s. 6d. which shows that even with the support of the local organisations the Borough was prepared to finance the cost of the week, recognising the significantly higher return they would enjoy on this relatively modest investment.

²⁷ County Borough of Bournemouth, Ninth Open Amateur Golf Tournament Programme

Table 7.1: The 1939 Prize Money, Fees and Income

Event	Prize Money	Entrance Fee
The Bournemouth Rotary Club Challenge Cup Competition	Replica cup to the winner 2 nd prize £3 3s. £1 1s. best gross each round	5s.
The Bournemouth Licensed Hotels and Restaurants Association Challenge Trophy Competition	A memento presented by the association 2 nd prize £2 2s.	2s. 6d.
Veteran's Comp (age 55 or over)	1 st prize £3 3s. 2 nd prize £2 2s.	2s. 6d.
Foursome Competition	1 st prize £3 3s. each 2 nd prize £2 2s. each	2s. 6d. each
Mixed Foursomes Competition	1 st prize £2 2s. each 2 nd prize £1 1s. 6d. each 3 rd prize £1 1s. each	5s. each
The County Borough of Bournemouth Challenge Cups Competition (Scratch and Handicap)	Replica cups to the winner 2 nd prize £3 3s. (Scratch & Handicap) £1 1s. for best gross and best net for each 18 holes	5s.
Four-Ball Foursome Competition	1 st prize £3 3s. each 2 nd prize £2 2s. each 3 rd prize £1 1s. each	2s. 6d. each
Totals	Cash: £55 13s.	£13 13s. 6d.

Source: County Borough of Bournemouth, Ninth Open Amateur Golf Tournament Programme

The programme is an excellent example of advertising on behalf of the Bournemouth Corporation; it carefully combined all of the necessary information for the competing golfer whilst also providing information for a visitor and their family staying in the town. As Inkson and Minnaert have stressed, once the marketer has identified who their customers are and what they want they should ensure that the customer is at the centre of marketing materials to maximise the benefit to the organisation.²⁸ The town's hotels and businesses also exploited the marketing potential by sponsoring several of the events and the presence of adverts within the programme. Hence, it could confidently be hypothesised that this event was a crucial part of the Bournemouth summer season. It offered the interested local parties an opportunity to capitalise on the influx of visitors into the town during the golfing week itself and also to encourage repeat business later in the year. This is what marketers call returning customers, and as these customers have made an active decision to return, they will go out of their way to do business with the organisation again. Return customers will also recommend destinations to friends

²⁸ Clare Inkson and Lynn Minnaert, *Tourism Management* (London: Sage 2018), 281

and family and so are very valuable, as positive word-of-mouth marketing is free publicity.²⁹

When determining who could be considered a tourist, there is a lack of one definitive method that can be used. This thesis previously examined Inglis' view that: 'holidays are somewhere you go away to'³⁰ but this is very generic and not necessarily one that can always be applied in academic research scenarios. When tracing the geographical recruitment of footballers playing in England in 1910, Vamplew stratified their origins into three levels: those who were recruited locally (within 12 miles), footballers recruited within the region or, finally, from distant locations, to determine their respective area of origin.³¹ This three-level methodology, although being used for a different outcome, can be applied to the research within this thesis and broadly complies with Bournemouth Corporation's own rules for the Leven Challenge Cup, that were adopted in 1896 that restricted to entry to amateurs from Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset. It can therefore be considered to be the equivalent of, from within the region, being the three neighbouring counties.³² Finally, but even more relevant, was the contemporary analysis of the 1936 Bournemouth Amateur Open that was presented by Major T.V. Rebbeck, Chair of the Tournaments Committee.³³ He separated the entrants into those from Bournemouth clubs (local), neighbouring clubs (region) and visitors (distant) and so once again validating the adoption of this approach for determining the geographical origin of the competitors for the 1936-1939 tournaments.

As discussed above, the data for this study was drawn from the entry register for the men's Bournemouth Open Amateur Golf Tournament and specifically the years 1936-1939 (Table 7.2). It shows that there were 1,031 entrants across the four years, with 1939 witnessing the greatest number of players entering when 273 were registered to play across the seven events.

²⁹ Inkson and Minnaert, *Tourism Management*, 293

³⁰ Inglis, *The Delicious History of the Holiday*, 8

³¹ Wray Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 206

³² Bournemouth Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee minutes, 6 March 1896; 13 April 1896

³³ *Bournemouth Evening Echo* 18 May 1936.

Table 7.2: The Geographical Location of Entrants for Bournemouth Open Week 1936-1939

Area of Origin	1936		1937		1938		1939		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		%
Local (within 12 miles)	165	65%	164	69%	189	72%	180	66%	698	67.7
Tri-counties	25	10%	29	12%	38	14%	31	11%	123	11.9
Distant	64	25%	46	19%	35	13%	52	19%	197	19.1
Overseas	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	1	0.1
Not recorded	1	0%	0	0%	2	1%	9	3%	12	1.2
Total	255		239		264		273		1031	
Berkshire	0		1		0		0		1	
Bristol (Gloucestershire)	3		3		2		2		10	
Cambridgeshire	0		0		1		0		1	
Cheshire	0		0		1		2		3	
Devon	4		0		1		4		9	
Dorset	11		13		19		15		58	
Essex	3		3		3		2		11	
Isle of Wight	4		2		1		1		8	
Greater London	20		12		9		9		50	
Hampshire	10		11		16		12		49	
Hertfordshire	2		3		0		1		6	
Kent	5		5		3		7		20	
Lancashire	0		0		0		1		1	
Leicester	0		1		0		0		1	
Lincolnshire	1		4		1		1		7	
Norfolk	1		1		1		0		3	
Northamptonshire	2		2		0		3		7	
Northumberland	0		0		0		1		1	
Nottinghamshire	0		1		0		0		1	
Shropshire	1		0		1		0		2	
Somerset	2		3		4		4		13	
Staffordshire	0		0		0		2		2	
Suffolk	0		0		1		0		1	
Surrey	5		2		2		0		9	
Sussex (West)	0		1		1		1		3	
Sussex (East)	1		0		0		2		3	
West Midlands	3		2		0		3		8	
Warwickshire	0		0		1		2		3	
Wiltshire	0		3		2		3		8	
Worcestershire	1		0		0		1		2	
Yorkshire (East)	0		0		0		1		1	
Yorkshire (South)	2		1		0		0		3	

Yorkshire (West)	2		0		0		0		2	
Ireland	1		1		1		1		4	
Scotland	1		0		1		1		3	
Wales	4		0		1		1		6	
Australia	0		0		0		1		1	
Total Non-local	89		75		73		84		321	31

Source: Bournemouth Golf Tournament: Register of Entries for Men's Meeting

When applying the three-level methodology to determine the entrant's geographical origin, it shows that 67.7% lived in Bournemouth or within a 12-mile radius of the town. A further 11.9% were from the neighbouring tri-counties of Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire.³⁴ This meant 19.2% were distant visitors, including one competitor in 1939 from overseas, who gave their address as Pennant Hills, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Finally, 1.2% of the entries only listed the player's name, with no home address recorded and so they could not be included in this analysis. This, however, provides a sample size of 31.1% or 321 competitors that travelled a distance to compete in the tournament and can be considered golfing visitors to Bournemouth. Across the first three years of the study, there was a gentle downward trend in the number of golfing visitors attending from 35% to 27% in 1938, but this was reversed in 1939 when the numbers rose back to 30%.

Interestingly numbers quoted in the 1936 *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, by Major T.V. Rebbeck, Chair of the Tournaments Committee, stated that the entries, for 1936, were more numerous than previous years. However, the number of visitors did not come up to the 1933 record. In that year, 133 competitors could be classified as visitors, but this did include the entrants to the ladies events in addition to the men's tournament. So an exact comparison cannot be made with eighty-nine gentlemen who entered in 1936.³⁵ Golf Weeks did achieve their objective in attracting a noteworthy number of visitors to Bournemouth each year within this study. In terms of the geographic location of origin of the entrants, there is evidence that Dorset, Greater London and Hampshire provided

³⁴ Note that Bournemouth was in Hampshire until the 1974 Local Government reorganisation.

³⁵ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 18 May 1936

the largest number of competitors with fifty-eight, fifty and forty-nine respectively. (Table 7.2)

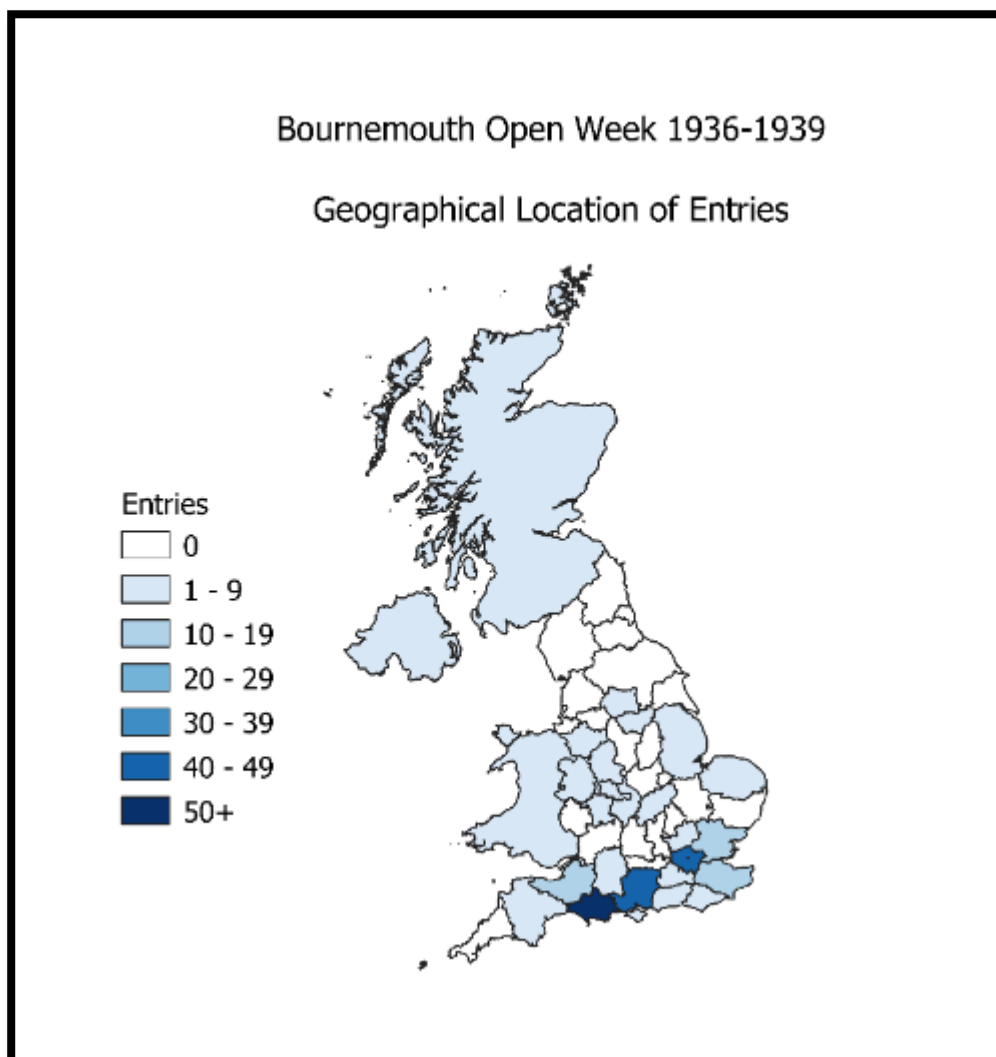


Figure 7.4: Geographical Location of Entries

Indeed, visitors travelled from thirty-three different English counties to compete including Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk together with players from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This is also represented pictorially (Figure 6.4) which is a Heat-Map of Great Britain, reflecting the density of geographical origin. This task was further complicated as the county borders have changed since the 1930s: counties like Sussex have been separated into East and West, and Middlesex and parts of Surrey have been consumed into Greater London. Specific addresses, therefore, had to be plotted against current-day county boundaries to produce this representative map. The map also shows that it was not just a local Southern tournament with considerable distances

covered. One entrant, Harvey Keighley from Bradford, Yorkshire, travelled 270 miles (one-way) and another, Dr R.G.J. McCullagh from Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire came 260 miles to attend. Even greater distances were required, for example, Mr Pentland from Scotland journeying south on more than one occasion from Edinburgh, a distance of over 450 miles and Dr Gilbert thrice travelling across the Irish Sea from Northern Ireland which would have exceeded 500 miles including his boat journey. This commitment demonstrates the quality and drawing power of the Bournemouth Tournament and further shows how the event would have economically benefited several of the enablers that permitted these gentlemen to travel and then stay in Bournemouth.

Three further findings in this study identify the quality of home-courses, the proficiency and age of the visiting golfers. Firstly, the competitors played their home-golf at several illustrious clubs, which demonstrates that the reputation of the Bournemouth Tournament was able to attract entrants from this stratum of golf clubs. This included three Open Championship courses: Princes, Birkdale³⁶ and most notably The R&A. Other Royal clubs to provide competitors included Royal Norfolk, Royal Mid-Surrey and Royal Belfast and finally one competitor listed Wentworth as his home club. Wheeler has identified how the Royal title prefix added to the cultural capital of a club; a club that had hosted the Open Championship would have carried similar kudos and so attracting members from these clubs was a significant achievement for the organisers of the Bournemouth Tournament.³⁷ Secondly, a marker of the quality of the golf is the ability or proficiency of the players participating. For golf, this is represented by a player's handicap. Of the 174 visitors, five players had a handicap of scratch or better. A further 119 were single figure handicaps, only eight entered with a handicap above twenty and the average handicap was fractionally over ten. Today, an average handicap is considered to be fifteen and that is with all of the modern club and ball technology that makes the game easier. Therefore, the players competing in the 1936-1939 Bournemouth Tournaments were evidently of good quality with high skill levels to play

³⁶ Birkdale was not granted the 'Royal' title until 1951.

³⁷ Wheeler. 'An Ambitious Club on a Small Scale', 477-497

off the handicaps they possessed. Finally, to become proficient in any sport, time to practise is required as skills are learnt rather than instinctive; even the basic skills need to be learnt. We cannot say we are skilled until we can perform a skill consistently.³⁸

This can often be reflected in a person's age, and the records show that the average age of the visiting competitor in the Bournemouth Opens was forty-five years old. The oldest visitor was Robert Pentland of Edinburgh who was born in 1861 and so when he entered the 1939 event he was 78 years old, but still playing off a good handicap of 10 at his home course of Bruntsfield. The youngest was aged nineteen, a Mr R.B.

Lauriston, who was an articled solicitor and played his golf at Enfield GC near his north London home. Mr Lauriston's handicap is somewhat counterintuitive to the age and ability principle, as his handicap was four and another competitor, a Mr D.F. Burns, playing at Wimbledon Park, by the age of twenty-two had become a scratch golfer. Mr Burns' occupation as a stock-broking clerk and Mr Lauriston's as an articled solicitor provide us with a clue as to how they both defied their lack of age-related experience. Both young gentlemen also enjoyed having a father whose occupation provided another essential commodity that allowed a sportsman to develop their sporting skills, that is, money. Mr Lauriston's father was a solicitor and Mr Burns' father was a retired banker and so both young men are likely to have had the opportunity to play golf from an early age at their father's club and to receive tuition from the club professional. Indeed most clubs were keen to provide concessions for the children of existing members as it was a sustainable method of developing the next generation of members.³⁹

As can be seen within the local and national press coverage of the 1936-1939 tournaments, there was an explicit reference to the participation of these golfing visitors and that their success was highlighted. It is apparent from these accounts the press was very keen, or perhaps encouraged, to report that the tournaments were not just for local golfers and did attract competitors from across the country to Bournemouth; this helped to encourage new golfers in entering in future years. Analyses of the *Bournemouth Evening Echo* accounts of the tournament reveal that in 1936, 'Dr R.G.J. McCullagh, the visitor from Cleethorpes, won the Bournemouth Rotatory Club Challenge Cup in the

³⁸ Terry McMorris, *Acquisition and Performance of Sports Skills*, 2nd ed. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 1

³⁹ Vamplew, 'Concepts of Capital', 299-331

first event of the sixth Open Amateur Golf Tournament at Meyrick Park with a remarkably low score of 133'. *The Echo* also noted that, 'T.F.B. Law West Hill, Surrey, also challenged but finished well down on 150 and C.G. Fox of Ryde came fourth on 143'.⁴⁰ The next day the same paper highlighted, 'the brothers H.H. and V.T. Barnes of Tankersley Park, Barnsley, were winners of the 18-hole medal foursomes with 69 ½ nett', before adding, 'it was a popular victory as the Barnes brothers have been regular visitors to Bournemouth for golf for some years'.⁴¹ In the final event in 1936, the *Bournemouth Evening Echo*'s headline proclaimed that two competitors in the closing event had 'Greatness thrust upon them!' The paper then elaborated, 'Local player FW King was allowed to enter as a substitute when a player scratched owing to a family bereavement before King and his new holidaying partner, H.K. Lester (Sutton Coldfield) returned 6-up, a score two better than the runners-up'.⁴² *The Times* reported on the 1936 Bournemouth Meeting in its Sporting News pages; this demonstrated to the national audience that the golfing tourists were successful with Dr McCullagh's victory being included, but adding that he was a member of Elsham GC, Lincolnshire.⁴³ The Barnes brothers' victory in the foursomes was recorded, as was H.K. Lester's final day win in the bogey competition.⁴⁴ It is noticeable how *The Times* did not include any of the descriptive text that the local paper penned, but by adding the name of the winner's home-club within its brief report it illustrated to its national readership how visitors were welcome to, and could triumph at the Bournemouth Golf Week. This modest and matter of fact style of reporting was further demonstrated when highlighting that C.S. Buckley (Blackwell) was second in the County Borough of Bournemouth Challenge Cup, without making any reference to his previous career in professional football.⁴⁵

In 1937 the *Bournemouth Evening Echo* continued to highlight the performance of visiting golfers noting how T.M. Askew from Northampton tied for second in the

⁴⁰ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 12 May 1936

⁴¹ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 13 May 1936

⁴² *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 18 May 1936

⁴³ *The Times*, 13 May 1936

⁴⁴ *The Times*, 14 May 1936 and 18 May 1936

⁴⁵ *The Times*, 16 May 1936

Bournemouth Association of Hotels and Restaurants Challenge Cup Competition.⁴⁶ The performance of John Santall was celebrated as being only one stroke behind the leader after the first round of the County Cups.⁴⁷ Santall had given his address as still living in Birmingham despite his home course being listed as Parkstone, a local Dorset course, suggesting Santall was in the habit of regularly visiting the South Coast for golfing holidays. On the following day, the *Echo* noted that the prize for the best second-round 18-holes for the County Cups went to DF Ashton representing the R&A with a 73.⁴⁸ Although Mr Ashton gave his address as the Toft House Hotel, Bournemouth, his association with the R&A was considered to be highly noteworthy to further promote the status and quality of the Bournemouth Week.

Reports of the visitor's performance in the *Bournemouth Evening Echo* continued in 1938 starting with the exploits of D.G. Heasman (Brockton Hall). It proclaimed, 'Heasman was the only player to break 80 with a gross score in the first round of the Rotary Cup played at Queens Park.'⁴⁹ Unfortunately for Heasman the *Echo* noted, 'Heasman failed to maintain his form of the morning but finished well down [after the second round].' However, two more visiting golfers, Dr J.C. Gilbert of Belfast and E. Woodford of Hayling GC finished joint-fifth after 36-holes.⁵⁰ The following day the *Bournemouth Evening Echo* celebrated, 'there was almost success in the Veterans Cup for S.B. Spencer-Walker (Stratford upon Avon GC) who tied for first place with the excellent score of 71 with local player R.J.M. Nabney.' The paper continued explaining that, 'Nabney won by virtue of the better score over the last 9-holes.'⁵¹ Finally, in 1938 two good scores were reported having been returned by visitors in the Borough Cups. Firstly, 'Captain Owen Steel of the Gordon Highlanders who was home from leave from Singapore led the short [low] handicap at the end of the first round in the County Borough and Bournemouth Challenge Cup with an excellent net 66.'⁵² Captain Steel had a London address, but was in 1938 serving abroad with the army and listed his club

⁴⁶ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 13 April 1937

⁴⁷ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 16 April 1937

⁴⁸ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 17 April 1937

⁴⁹ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 9 May 1938

⁵⁰ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 10 May 1938

⁵¹ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 11 May 1938

⁵² *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 12 May 1938

as Singapore GC. The importance and prestige of his military and the colonial connection should be noted, particularly in this inter-war period, as a further endorsement of the quality of the Bournemouth Open. The second visitor who presented a challenge to leaders was S. Morris, a visitor from Essex, who returned the score of 69.⁵³ Unfortunately for Steel and Morris, neither of them could maintain their challenge in the second round and the *Bournemouth Evening Echo* lamented that, '[Steel] cracked completely at the last six holes finishing on 88 and Morris was 10-strokes worse and this put him out of contention.'⁵⁴

In the 1939 tournament, it appears that, the local players were well to the fore in all events and visitors found it difficult on the first day of the annual event. There was very much a sense of local pride displayed in the *Bournemouth Evening Echo* as it added, '[The] Event was dominated by local players and showed the standard of play in the borough is equal to other foreign entries.'⁵⁵ It was only in the main event of the tournament that the newspaper noted any evidence of visiting players gaining success: 'the Handicap division was won by H.W.J. Rodford, a visitor from Swindon with two rounds of 73 off a handicap of 14.' Some other accounts of visitors included a report on one celebrity competitor and the minor placings achieved by three other visiting golfers: 'Chris Buckley, the former Aston Villa footballer and brother of Major Frank Buckley, Wolverhampton Wanderers manager had two rounds of 78. He is a plus-one golfer, the only one competing in the tournament. Dr J.B. Allan of Belton Park was fourth, Ian Matthews from Coombe Hill seventh and Woodford from Hayling finishing eight.'⁵⁶ This supports the *Bournemouth Times*' assertion that the local players were significantly more successful than the visitors, on the last occasion the tournament was held before the outbreak of World War Two. After a two year absence of any significant reporting in *The Times*, there was mention of M. Bickell from Cowes, Isle of Wight who came second in the 18-hole Bogey competition.⁵⁷ Maurice Bickell was in 1939 a thirty-two-

⁵³ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 13 May 1938

⁵⁴ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 14 May 1938

⁵⁵ *Bournemouth Times*, 12 May 1939

⁵⁶ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 13 May 1939

⁵⁷ *The Times*, 10 May 1939

year-old bank clerk making his only appearance in the Bournemouth Week. However, the other accounts in *The Times* replicated the local press in featuring the success of local golfers at the expense of the visitors. Indeed, the Bournemouth Golf Week was still proving to be popular with 124 competitors contending the week's main event, the Bournemouth Challenge Cup, and ninety-two pairs entering the four-ball event on the final day of competition. The identification of visiting golfers' home-club was still prominently reported in the local press, with players from Royal Belfast, Hendon, East Somerset and Torbay golf clubs individually listed.⁵⁸ The tournament's economic, social and reputational value to the town was recognised by Alderman Rebbeck, the Chair of the Parks Committee, at the prize-giving ceremony. The Alderman praised the Chamber of Trade by putting on the record that, 'they were anxious to do everything in their power to encourage publicity of the town.'⁵⁹

7.4 A Social Profile of the Competitors at the 1936-1939 Bournemouth Open Amateur Golf Tournaments

Lastly, when summarising the total of 321 visiting competitors over the four years of the study, it revealed this comprised of 174 unique individuals who travelled to Bournemouth. Many of the players were regulars who attended on more than one occasion, which accounts for the variance between the two figures. To identify these 174 individuals in terms of their demographic and socio-economic status, I used the 1939 Register. The 1939 Register was effectively a census listing the personal details of every civilian in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It was undertaken following Britain's declaration of war with Germany, and it was a critical tool in coordinating the war effort. It was used to issue identity cards, organise rationing and more.⁶⁰ Access to the Register was particularly welcome as normal census records are not available until one hundred years have elapsed from the year that they were taken. So the most recent edition that was accessible when the research was undertaken was the 1911 census. The data from that census could not be considered suitable having been collected a

⁵⁸ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 9, 10, 12 May 1939

⁵⁹ *Bournemouth Evening Echo*, 29 May 1939

⁶⁰ National Registration Day was 29th September 29 1939 and forms were issued to more than 41 million people.

minimum of twenty-five years before the 1936 Bournemouth Tournament. In two and a half decades, many of the subjects would have moved home or developed their occupation, potentially weakening the reliability and validity of this study. Long reminds us that the validity of data is critical and that significance is firmly linked to the richness of the information.⁶¹ By using the names and addresses of the competitors, taken from the 1936-1939 entry lists, I was able to search the on-line version of the 1939 Register.⁶² Of the 174 individuals, only 125 were traceable. Reasons for this variation can be explained when considering that the war had commenced three weeks before the Register was compiled, and a number of the men who played in the Bournemouth Tournaments had already commenced their military service. Some families, particularly in the cities, would have been evacuated. Others would have moved house for no war-related reasons since their addresses were listed in the 1936 Bournemouth Tournament records. However, a sample size of 125 (72%) can still be considered to be significant and it meant that it was possible to draw some meaningful conclusions from the analysis of the available information.

Outside of wartime requirements, the level of detail a government needs to understand about its citizens has long been debated. Economic and social historians are commonly concerned with groups rather than individuals and often at a local or national level. This form of information now helps to aid our understanding of how society lived.⁶³ The challenge of stratifying census returns is shown by considering that the 1851 census recorded 877 different occupations and a system of classes and sub-classes was devised to separate them into more manageable and meaningful data. Initially, there were seventeen classes and ninety-one sub-classes and this had increased to twenty-four classes by 1911 with 472 occupations or sub-classes mentioned to reflect the growth in

⁶¹ Jonathan Long, *Researching leisure, sport and tourism: the essential guide*, (London: Sage, 2007), 43

⁶² FindMyPast. *1939 Register*, <https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/1939-register>, (accessed 28 June 2019).

⁶³ Guy Routh, *Occupation and Pay in Great Britain: 1906 – 60*, (Cambridge University Press, 1965), 1-2

different forms of professions.⁶⁴ The Registrar-General’s social classification scheme in 1911 assigned occupations along the lines, as shown in (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3: Registrar-General’s 1911 Social classification scheme.

Class I:	The upper and middle class, white-collar occupations.
Class II:	Intermediates between the middle and working classes, including trades such as shop-keepers.
Classes III, IV, V:	The working-class, with Class III being the skilled workers and V the unskilled.
Classes VI, VII and VIII:	Were further sub-groups of the working class, who were identified according to occupation with VI textile workers, VII miners and VIII agricultural labours

Source: Armstrong, The use of information about occupation, 203-4

In subsequent revisions of the scheme in 1921 and 1931, the clerk was relegated from Class I to Class II and then to Class III.⁶⁵ The economist Routh, in his studies published in the 1960s, identified seven different occupational classes and calculated the distribution by class as per (Table 7.4).⁶⁶

Table 7.4: Routh’s 1960s Occupational classifications

	Occupational Class	Distribution by class in 1931
1.	Professional	4.6%
2.	Employers and Proprietors (including managers)	10.36%
3.	Clerical Workers	6.97%
4.	Foremen, inspectors and supervisors)
5.	Skilled) 78.07% combined.
6.	Semi-skilled)
7.	Unskilled.)

Source: Guy Routh, Occupation and Pay in Great Britain:1906 – 60

Whereas, Vamplew used an extended version of Routh’s categories in his seminal works *Pay Up and Play the Game*. He added the Aristocracy and Gentry to the top of the list and located Managers, as a new and separate classification, between Employers and Proprietors and Clerical Workers. Therefore, with no definitive model recommended and a multitude of classification types available it shows the complexities

⁶⁴ W.A. Armstrong, ‘The use of information about occupation. Part 2. An industrial classification, 1841-1891,’ in *Nineteenth-century society*, ed. E.A. Wrigley (Cambridge University Press: Publisher, 1972), 193

⁶⁵ Armstrong, *The use of information about occupation*, 203-4

⁶⁶ Routh, *Occupation and Pay*, 6

of categorising this form of data. However, as Vamplew highlights, while his version might be considered to be imperfect, in the absence of any other information, it can serve as a suitable principle, particularly if the social groups are sufficiently broad. However, he concedes that the allocation to the respective categories can be difficult with the demarcation of occupations often challenging to distinguish from the definitions provided, but never too significant to impact on the validity of the exercise.⁶⁷

The final area of analysis of golfing visitors competing at the 1936-1939 Bournemouth Opens was a socio-economic study using the 1939 Registry data and Vamplew's nine-point Occupational Class scale from (1) Aristocracy to (9) Un-skilled. The results are shown in (Table 7.5).

Table 7.5: Occupational class of the entrants to the 1936-39 Bournemouth Amateur Opens

Occupational Class	Number
Aristocracy and Gentry	0
Professional	57
Employers	23
Managers	20
Clerical Workers	12
Foremen and Supervisors	3
Skilled	8
Semi-skilled	2
Unskilled	0

Source: Bournemouth Golf Tournament: Register of Entries for Men's Meeting

Amongst the fifty-seven who can be considered to hold Professional occupations, there were: eleven bank managers, eleven doctors, ten company directors, six engineers, four accountants, four solicitors and three military officers. Other Professionals included

⁶⁷ Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, 154

teachers, men who had taken up Holy Orders, an architect, a quantity surveyor, a Royal Air Force (RAF) instructor and a maritime pilot. Within the twenty-three Employers, there were twelve involved with the production of goods or services and five hoteliers or restaurant owners. Also, within this class was a golf club secretary who would have been responsible for employing greenkeepers, a golf professional and catering staff within the club. The twenty Managers included twelve shop-keepers of different varieties and two car-dealers. The largest group within the clerks comprised of eight bank clerks, many given their young age would have had ambitions to be upwardly-mobile and progress to the Professional class in time. Within the lower occupational classes, there were a small number of foremen, a baker, a tailor and a retired locomotive driver. Finally, two men have been classified as semi-skilled, one a general labourer and the other a hotel pantryman. Amongst the competitors, there were two who had previously been professional sportsmen in different sports. John Santall was an English first-class cricketer who played eight matches for Worcestershire in the early 1930s before retiring to become a professional ice-skater and instructor.⁶⁸ Secondly, Chris Buckley played football for Brighton, Aston Villa and Arsenal between 1905 and 1921. After retiring from football, he became a sales manager, but Buckley also combined this job with joining Aston Villa's board of directors in 1936.⁶⁹ Santall and Buckley were also gifted sportsmen in their second sport, playing off five and plus-one respectively, according to the list of players' handicaps in the Bournemouth entry register.

When establishing a benchmark to assess the composition of the golfing tourists who descended upon Bournemouth in the 1930s, there has been no comprehensive, in-depth analysis of golf club membership compositions from the pre-war years. However, there are several small-scale and individual studies published that have identified the structure of the typical golfing participant. Tranter surveyed the socio-occupational composition of the sportsmen in the Stirling area of Scotland at the end of the nineteenth century. It revealed that different classes followed their own form of sports but around nine out of ten golf club members were of social class B; annuitants, bank clerks, clerical workers, hoteliers and teachers with the rest from class A, the gentry; those living on their own

⁶⁸ *The Cricketer*, May 1987

⁶⁹ As per the 1939 Register; Tim Carder and Roger Harris, *Albion A-Z: A Who's Who of Brighton & Hove Albion F.C.* (Hove: Goldstone Books. 1997), 14.

means. Not a single golfer was from classes D or E, farm labourers and other general labourers.⁷⁰ One more relevant study that has been undertaken is David Martin's review of the membership at Minchinhampton GC in Gloucestershire. In this, he found that they were mainly landowners, proprietors of the major local industries such as woollen mills and engineering works, members of the professions, doctors, lawyers and the clergy, as well as serving and retired officers of the armed forces.⁷¹

At the Royal Isle of Wight GC, a list of the 1912 membership permitted me to undertake a similar form of investigation as I had taken for the entrants to the Bournemouth Open Tournament by cross-referencing the names and addresses with the UK Census records.⁷² The composition of the membership followed similar traits with my audit which found there to be a mix of army and navy men, and also some Reverends and other men who had taken up Holy Orders. Further examples of middle to upper-middle-class professions include a clerk in the Parliamentary Office of the House of Lords, a retired High Sheriff, an Author, a Master Merchant Marine and a Bank Agent.⁷³ However, despite these examples, there are few surviving published records of club membership but, to complement them, research into the make-up of golf club committees or their shareholders does offer some further glimpses into the occupations of those connected with golf clubs. Holt in his work on Stanmore GC identified that the composition of the club's shareholders included merchants, financiers, lawyers, doctors, military officers, schoolmasters, a chemist, an engineer, a clergyman, an artist, a musician and eleven gentlemen.⁷⁴ Vamplew's wider research, across almost one hundred clubs' committees, revealed many similarities, with the most common professions recorded as: manufacturers, lawyers, merchants, medical, retailing, financial, military officers and the gentry.⁷⁵ These examples do provide us with some

⁷⁰ Neil Tranter, *Sport, economy and society in Britain 1750-1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 40

⁷¹ David Martin, *Minchinhampton Golf Club Centenary History 1889-1989* (Minchinhampton Golf Club, 1989), 68,

⁷² The 1912 List of Members for the Royal Isle of Wight Golf Club was obtained from the private collection of Philip Truett.

⁷³ Wheeler, 'An ambitious club on a small scale', 477-497

⁷⁴ Richard Holt, 'Golf and the English Suburb: Class and Gender in a London Club, c.1890-C.1960.' *The Sports Historian* 18, no. 1 (May 1998): 76-89

⁷⁵ Vamplew, 'Concepts of Capital', 299-331

significant evidence of the golfing participant in the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century. Nevertheless, as Tranter recommends, further analysis is needed on the proportion of people who played and watched sport in terms of age, sex and social class composition as part of the sport revolution.⁷⁶

When summarising the golfing tourists competing in the Bournemouth Amateur Open they appear to conform to the previous research undertaken by Vamplew, Martin, Holt and Wheeler in that the majority of the competitors were drawn from the professional occupational class. There was a high propensity of bankers, doctors, military officers and manufacturing employers. The most striking result to emerge from the data is that about 90% of the competitors were from the upper echelons of society. In contrast, according to Routh, this demographic only accounted for 20% of the total UK population in the 1930s. This suggests that golf and holiday golf was still significantly played by this section of society. However, it is essential to note that the Bournemouth Open did attract Percy Elvery whose occupation was listed as a general labourer and Ralph Parsons working as a pantryman in a Devon hotel. Their occupations can both be classified as semi-skilled or skilled at best. So along with the drivers, foreman, baker, tailor, motion picture technician and an assistant in an electrical supply company this research provides further examples of a small but significant presence of skilled and working-class holiday golfers playing in the competitions. As an Open competition with no restrictions to who could enter, other than paying the modest entrance fees, it meant that these men could share the links and compete with golfers from professions, that at inland courses or in earlier years they would have been prohibited from doing. This is a critical revelation for one of the aims of this thesis. It demonstrates, along with the existence of the ladies' week and the inclusion of the mixed event within the men's week, that golf tourism did make some incremental improvements in making the game more accessible, both physically and socially, for the masses starting to break down some of the social and cultural barriers.

⁷⁶ Tranter, *Sport, economy and society in Britain*, 95

7.5 Conclusion

This analysis demonstrates the real beneficial outcomes for corporations investing in the provision of municipal golf courses. This chapter provides the first comprehensive investigation of how a focal point of the municipal golfing offer was the organisation of Golf Weeks or tournaments linked to other leisure events designed to encourage visitors to the town. The golf weeks were complemented by celebrity matches featuring the leading players of the day and these were examples of the place branding designed to enhance Bournemouth's reputation through golf. They enticed the out of town, passive golfers to visit and to challenge active golfers to test their golfing skills on the seaside courses after reading about the matches in the golfing and national press.

The case study, using the Bournemouth Golf Weeks, was not to suggest it was a unique or a single example. As the home of the first English municipal course and the subsequent organisation of a nationally advertised Open competition in 1895, it did have an element of historical precedence in this field. This chapter contextualises how the Corporation and local businesses recognised that the hosting of annual golf events would significantly help it achieve the objective of publicising the town and increasing the economic benefits that golfing tourists would bring. These findings are further example of place branding, with Bournemouth benefiting from the economic significance of the coverage for the town in terms of public relations. This was unmistakably underpinned in terms of the overall numbers and the participation of golfing tourists from across the British Isles, representing almost one-third of all the competitors.

Furthermore, with the local and national press reporting on the programme of events and highlighting the presence and the success of the visiting players, the press was instrumental in promoting and then sustaining the awareness of and the economic benefits produced by Bournemouth Golf Week. The analysis of the demographics, including the occupational classifications of the visiting golfers competing in the golf weeks is a significant addition to our new knowledge on the socio-economic status of inter-war golf tourists. This research has shown that the majority of the golfer's position and rank in society was similar to previous research; it did reveal, however, a minority presence of the entrants were from manual working-class occupations. Together with

the various events for women, this provides us with consistent evidence of how the normal barriers to participation in golf in the pre-war period were being challenged by golf tourism. Naturally, the most prestigious golf tournament held on the South Coast was The Open Championship which was played eleven times on the three Kent courses between 1894 and 1938. These major events appealed to the passive golf tourist and attracted thousands of visitors to watch the professionals compete. The next chapter will meet Tranter's recommendation for thoroughly analysing the sporting revolution by investigating the composition and behaviours of these crowds of golfing tourists.

Chapter 8

Golfing Tourists as Spectators at Championship Events in Kent 1894-1938

8. Golfing Tourists as Spectators at Championship Events in Kent 1894-1938

‘The Open Championship began in this somewhat out of the way corner of Kent. When the Championship started over thirty years ago, it never entered into the minds of even the most far-seeing golfer that it would take place on the shores of the English Channel.’¹

8.1 Introduction

The importance and nature of spectatorship, what Gibson called passive sports tourism is reviewed here.² It focuses on the spectators attending the major professional and amateur men’s and women’s golf tournaments played in Kent on the three championship courses from 1892 to 1938. Kent venues hosted the bulk of the national golf championships that were played in the south of England and so provided the natural location for this study. The chapter discovers who attended these events and charts the scale, composition, experiences, behaviours and instances of patriotic pride and passion displayed by the golf crowds over the forty-six years.

The merits, if somewhat remoteness, of golf in Kent were recognised by John Sutherland in his *The Daily News* column in 1909 when he noted, ‘down in that out of the way corner of Kent, where so much fine golf is obtainable’.³ The evidence from this chapter suggests that East Kent was not a densely populated area of the county with masses of local sports-loving inhabitants. It can therefore be assumed that as the quality of the golf links in Kent were widely acknowledged as being superb and with the excellent railway links having been developed through the county to mitigate its remoteness, the galleries who attended these golf tournaments would predominantly have been composed of passive golf tourists rather than locals. This position is supported by evidence of additional transport provision to accommodate the spectators; special trains were scheduled from London and, in the 1930s, arrangements were made for the parking of motor-cars. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to estimate the distance travelled by these car-owning passive golf tourists, as no records have

¹ *The Scotsman*, 12 June 1894

² Gibson, *Sport Tourism*, 45-76

³ Golf Causerie, *The Daily News*, 12 June 1909

survived, but evidence of access by motor-car is demonstrated through images and written records.

As Huggins argues, the challenge for historians of sport who examine the past beyond living memory is that data gathering approaches such as interviews or ethnographic work are not possible and so alternative methods need to be employed.⁴ Consequently, a series of different sources that discussed attendance figures or the amount of gate monies received have been used to identify the extent of these crowds.⁵ Additional attempts have been made to establish the status of people in attendance through the examination of images of the golfing galleries. This reflects Huggins and O'Mahony's position that pictures can be employed to analyse different historical moments.⁶ The extensive use of newspaper archives was used to achieve these goals, but also applied to ascertain evidence of crowd interaction with the players and to discover what would now be termed the overall visitor experience of these Golf Championships. Thus a form of discourse analysis, a way of constructing knowledge from the social practices within a specific social context was required. Foucault suggests epistemology or knowledge is inextricably linked to what is being represented as a truth or a norm.⁷ However, this can be viewed as a very rigid practice. So, audience studies, as Kopietz et al. suggest, are not unbiased, objective documentation of events but offer sets of meanings, metaphors, and stories. The representations construct a particular interpretation, yet one that the biasing of eyewitnesses' memory and judgment might skew.⁸ The media is essential and critically inter-connected to how sport is portrayed and understood.⁹ This risk of bias is equally true for newspaper articles that were written for particular audiences or where the writer's biases, including any unconscious biases they possessed may have shaped the narrative. Although all forms of the media provide us with multiple narratives and images, they do not inform us of what to think, but they do continuously tell us what to

⁴ Mike Huggins, 'The visual in sport history: approaches, methodologies and sources.' *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32, no. 15 (2015): 1813-1830.

⁵ Admission Fees were not charged for The Open until 1926.

⁶ Huggins and O'Mahony, Prologue: 'Extending Study of the Visual', 1089-1104

⁷ Michel Foucault, 'The order of discourse,' in *Untying the text: a post-structural anthology*, ed. R. Young (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 48-78

⁸ Kopietz et al. 'Audience-Congruent Biases in Eyewitness Memory and Judgment: Influences of a Co-Witness' Liking for a Suspect', *Social Psychology*; 40, no. 3 (2009): 138-149

⁹ Roberts, *The Business of Leisure*, 186

think about.¹⁰ All media content is selected, interpreted and edited to achieve several varying goals; shaping values, providing a public service or expressing the views creatively. The media effectively becomes part of the event but is also an image-maker. This provides a powerful platform to produce narratives consistent with the ideologies of the author and to meet their audience's interests.¹¹ However, Bruce suggests that too often people fail to think critically about the content. In contrast, they ought to apply a method of more in-depth understanding by encoding and decoding the material.¹² The material collected has, therefore, been coded into several themes to provide insight into the crowds of the passive golf tourists.

8.2 Kent; a Brief Golfing-Geo-Socio-Economic Perspective

The first thirty-three editions of The Open Championships had all been held on just three courses in Scotland when the Championship Committee decided to expand the rota. In recognition of the growth of the game in England, the Championship Committee awarded (Royal) St. George's, in Sandwich, Kent with the honour of becoming the first English course to host The Open, in 1894. The club's Royal title was not conferred until 1902 by which time St. Georges had hosted The Open for a second time. The course was generally referred to as just Sandwich in most literary accounts. This decision was significant and central to the findings of this chapter; indeed there was concern that this location would deter Scottish professionals and who were subsequently offered subsidised rail fares to encourage them to travel to the south-east tip of England.¹³ There is no record of how spectators viewed this decision, but it must have caused some level of resentment as *The Glasgow Herald* lamented, 'the only drawback is the long journey necessary in order to reach this remote district from Scotland'.¹⁴ This sentiment was seen as a recurring theme in newspaper accounts and is significant for the context of this review.

¹⁰ Jay Coakley and Elizabeth Pike, *Sports in Society*, (Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill, 2014), 401

¹¹ Coakley and Pike, *Sports in Society*, 42

¹² Huggins, 'The visual in Sport History', 1813-1830; Toni Bruce, 'Reflections on communication and sport; on women and femininities', *Communications and Sport* 1, no. 1/2 (2013): 125-137

¹³ Francis Murray, *The British Open: A Twentieth-Century History* (London: Pavilion Books, 2000), 15

¹⁴ *The Glasgow Herald*, 12 June 1894

Hoyle (Royal Liverpool) was quickly added in 1897, but with an agreement that The Open Championship should rotate between Scotland and England; it was decided that a further English course was required to even up the rotation. So another Kent course, Royal Cinque Ports, Deal was added in 1909.¹⁵ When golf resumed following World War One in 1920, The Open Championship returned to Royal Cinque Ports, the first under the direct control of the R&A. Royal Cinque Ports' attributes were advocated by J.H. Taylor who described how the layout of the links made it easy for the spectators to scuttle across from one side to the other to find out how the players were getting on.¹⁶ A third Kent course had appeared on The Open Championship rota, albeit only once when in 1932 The Open was successfully played at Prince's GC. Thus, Kent became firmly established as a destination for The Open Championship over the first half of the twentieth century. This was on account of the true links nature of the courses and the popularity of golf in the south east of England in terms of playing and watching. This was first demonstrated in 1894 when *The Scotsman* argued, 'nowhere in England has the game made greater strides than in the Metropolis [London] but the lack of suitable ground in the neighbourhood of the great city no doubt led to the discovery of Sandwich'.¹⁷ In the same year, *The Sketch* described Sandwich as 'these beautiful links on the Channel and in my opinion Sandwich is as good as St Andrews or Prestwick'.¹⁸ It was not only professional golf events that were held on these Kent courses, as the 1930 Walker Cup and eleven British Amateur Championships for men and ladies were played at Royal St. Georges and Royal Cinque Ports between 1892 and 1937.

Other than for cricket, Kent did not possess a significant sporting pedigree to encourage the local population to become ardent sports spectators.¹⁹ This reflects Wann et al.'s fandom theory of personal investment that suggests people need a range of items to encourage sport consumer behaviour, and this includes quality, history and vicarious achievement.²⁰ Prior to the development of its seaside resorts, Kent was known as the

¹⁵ *The Glasgow Herald*, 18 Nov 1907; *The Times*, 18 Nov 1907

¹⁶ Taylor, *Golf: My Life's Work*, 164

¹⁷ *The Scotsman*, 12 June 1894

¹⁸ *The Sketch*, 20 June 1894

¹⁹ Derek Birley, *Land of Sport and Glory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 25

²⁰ Daniel Wann et al., *Sport Fans: The Psychology and Social Impact of Spectators* (London: Routledge, 2001), 54

garden of England, with agriculture and food production being Kent's primary means of prosperity.²¹ Further industries and source of employment within the county were the Royal Naval dockyards at Chatham and Sheerness, and the railways that provided some added employment with the establishment of the engineering works in Ashford.²² Despite this industrial development, Kent, and East Kent in particular, was not densely populated. At the turn of the century, only Folkestone had a population greater than 30,000.²³

Until the early nineteenth century, the access to and even throughout Kent for any activity was particularly challenging and only possible on foot or by horse on account of the lack of major navigable rivers. Only along the north Kent coast was boat travel possible and this was often dangerous, in the exposed waters of the Thames estuary.²⁴ Even after the major roads in the county were turnpiked in the early nineteenth century the situation barely improved, with the roads proving to be dusty tracks in the summer and to consist of deep mud in the winter. This meant that transport was still a challenge and restricting significant development and prosperity in the county.²⁵ It was the building of the railway line from London to Dover in 1844 by the SERC that opened the county up and made future transport easier, particularly as the network spread through the county including branch lines to Sandwich and Deal in 1846/7.²⁶ The journey time was 2 ¼ hours, very similar to today. The new faster and safer railways accelerated the development of the seaside holiday, including golf tourism to the resorts of the East Kent coast.²⁷ When The Open was held at Royal Cinque Ports GC in 1909, special through express trains from London Charing Cross to Deal, with the option of return tickets for the same, or following day, provided services for the golfing tourist travelling from the capital.²⁸ For those visitors spending the night in Kent, *The Times* golf

²¹ Frank Jessup, *A History of Kent* (London: Darwen Finlayson, 1958), 131

²² Jessup, *A History of Kent*, 172

²³ Population of Kent Parish Census 1801 to 1921, *Kent Archaeological Society*, <https://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/03/03/05/356-370.htm>, (accessed 25 November 2018)

²⁴ Jessup, *A History of Kent*, 98

²⁵ Jessup, *A History of Kent*, 147; Jessup, *Kent History Illustrated*, 48.

²⁶ Jessup, *A History of Kent*, 165

²⁷ Jessup, *A History of Kent*, 162; Jessup, *Kent History Illustrated*, 52

²⁸ *The Times*, 4 June 1909

correspondence Bernard Darwin noted that The Bell in Sandwich, complete with garage and The Guildford Hotel in Sandwich Bay were two of the best.²⁹

This investigation of Kent's sporting and socio-economic infrastructure suggests that it had a robust middle-class preference in terms of its sporting inclinations. This was reinforced demographically by, in general, the rural or small-town population and the lack of mass, heavy industry. Therefore, it can be hypothesised that any major golfing events staged on the east coast of Kent would not have been attended by a significant number of local golfers or even by local sports enthusiasts. Consequently, and despite a lack of any hard evidence, a large proportion of the spectators must have been golf tourists travelling there from London, the sizeable golfing population in the wider south east of England, or Scots mourning the loss of their monopoly of hosting The Open.

8.3 The Scale and Profile of Spectator Tourism at the Kent Opens 1894-1938.

Before investigating the numbers, consideration should be given to what motivated people to attend the Open Championship. Bladen et al. and Steen have studied widely the strong relationship between sport and events, and the emergence of spectator sport as an essential branch of popular culture has widely been acknowledged.³⁰ This fixation with Spectatorism has created an annual calendar of sporting fixtures and events to which fans, be they the dedicated and passionate local fans who follow their home team weekly through the season, or the sports tourist who makes less frequent visits to watch sporting events, are compelled to attend.³¹ Events have therefore played an important part in sport and by association for sports tourism and Crompton and Dann have identified the pleasurable consumption of unnecessary activities as an escape from one's typical mundane routine.³² The socio-psychological concepts associated with social interaction and the witnessing of prestigious, once in a lifetime events are factors that influenced and motivated the passive consumption of sport. In contrast was the fear of

²⁹ *The Times*, 16 May 1914

³⁰ Charles Bladen, et al., *Event Management: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2012), 219; Steen, *Floodlight and Touchlines*, 74

³¹ Zauhar, 'Historical perspectives of sports tourism', 5–101

³² John Crompton, 'Motivations for pleasure vacation', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6, no.4 (1979): 408-424; Graham Dann, 'Anomie, ego-enhancement and tourism', *Annals of Tourism Research* 4, no.4 (1977): 184-194.

missing out (FOMO), a social anxiety that one might be absent from an exciting and rewarding experience.³³ Psychological factors linked to self-esteem have also been attributed, highlighting the chance to be part of the celebrations and creating a positive feeling of oneself. Chen identified that another personal value of attending events might include identification or social identity, known as conspicuous consumption and the inducement to enhance one's social status simply by being seen there. Finally she highlighted that, for some, it was a modern form of pilgrimage to attend events at specific famous sporting venues, such as St. Andrews, Lord's or Wembley.³⁴

When looking for authenticated evidence of crowd size, there is a lack of official figures in any of the three Kent club archives or the R&A records. The first indication of the relative size of the crowds attending The Open can be ascertained from studying the amount of gate money taken. For the first sixty years of The Open no gate money had been charged; it was discussed in 1923 but deferred until it was introduced in 1926 at Royal Lytham & St Annes GC and then collected continuously from 1928 when it was again held at Sandwich.³⁵ Initially, the charging of gate money was not an example of creeping commercialism, but designed to limit the number of spectators and specifically to deter undesirable spectators. In this latter point, it does provide one clear example of social exclusion, by barring those of lesser means who were considered to be unattractive to the members of the Championship Committee, they were aiming to provide a spectacle for their equals and not the masses. However, as Lewis notes, the money raised was utilised to help the Championship Committee in any way it thought best for the game, but mainly to help fund the expenses associated with running the Walker Cup rather than to increase the prize money for the professionals. The original policy of not collecting entrance fees was supported in *The Yorkshire Post* when it wrote, 'It is one of the great advantages of golf that it is not a gate-money game, and

³³ Patricia R. Hetz, Christi L. Dawson and Theresa A. Cullen, 'Social Media Use and the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) While Studying Abroad', *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* 47, no.4 (2015): 259-272.

³⁴ Po-Ju. Chen, 'The Attributes, Consequences, and Values Associated With Event Sport Tourists Behaviour: A Means-End Chain Approach', *Event Management* 13, no. 4 (2006): 1-22

³⁵ Peter Lewis, 'The Structure and Format of the Open Championship 1919-1939' *Golfiana* 6, no.2 (1994): 34-41.

therefore the professionals will never be able to dictate terms to its rulers'.³⁶ What is clear is that the total gate money taken for the Opens held in Kent was significantly less than in Scotland or the north west of England. When it was first collected in 1926 at Royal Lytham, the amount was £1,092, but there was over a 50% fall at Royal St. George's two years later. Similarly, in 1931 when the Open was held at Carnoustie, the income was £1,543, whereas the next year at Prince's it was just £625. A new record was set in 1933 at St. Andrews with £1,988 taken, against only £748 at Royal St. George's in 1934. Finally, after breaking the £2,000 barrier in 1937 in Carnoustie, in 1938 at Royal St. George's it was just £822.³⁷ It appears that the crowds, if gate money is the barometer, were consistently lower at the Kent courses through the period of the study. No specific reasons why this should have been the case have been discovered, but various accounts acknowledge that crowds in Kent were traditionally lower than at other venues.

According to information located in the Royal St. Georges archive, admission charges to the course for the 1938 Open for non-members were 2s. 6d. per day and 10s. for the week. The former could only be obtained at the pay-boxes on the course. In contrast, applications for the latter had to be made through the Secretary. Therefore, a very rough calculation suggests there were approximately 6,500 paying spectators in addition to the club members in attendance. However, this figure is at odds with newspaper accounts, although they might have also guessed or inflated the figures. Therefore, two alternative methods of research used to identify the size of the crowds are articles in the newspapers and images of the Opens.

The local newspapers and books have not proved to be too helpful with just vague and generic references to the size of the crowds. *The Edinburgh Evening News* reporting on the first Open held in 1894 at Sandwich noted, 'There was a large gathering of spectators when a start was made at a quarter to ten'.³⁸ Similarly, *The Morning Post* at the same event observed, 'There was a large number of spectators, who accompanied

³⁶ *The Yorkshire Post*, 7 June 1899

³⁷ Lewis, *The Structure and Format of the Open Championship*, 40-41

³⁸ *Edinburgh Evening News*, 11 June 1894

the players in crowds more or less numerous, according to their popularity'.³⁹ Whereas, in contrast, five years later when The Open returned to Sandwich the *South Wales Echo* informed its readers, 'The Open Championship commenced this morning, but the early couples did not have large galleries, but fine golf was seen'.⁴⁰ These accounts demonstrate that journalists were trying to illustrate to their readers an indication of the crowd's size in the absence of official figures. The same ambiguity in reporting actual numbers is shown for the accounts of the Amateur Championships. This shows there was no difference in reporting style between the approach for the professional and amateur matches: 'A large company [crowd] visited the course [at Sandwich] to watch the [semi and] final of the 1892 Championships'.⁴¹ The famous golf correspondent Bernard Darwin writing in his typical descriptive style for *The Times* waxed, 'a large crowd [was] sweeping across the course in front of the players'.⁴² This account gave the reader a sense of movement and the crowd's involvement, to complement the more mundane details of merely the extent of the gallery. However, when reporting on the same event, the 1914 Amateur Championship once again hosted at Sandwich, *The Northern Whig* informed its readers 'a crowd of quite 4,000 followed the last stages'.⁴³ This is the first attempts found that estimated or quantified the size of the crowd in precise terms. It tries to assist the reader in picturing the relative size of the crowd, therefore, with an absolute figure rather than a vague descriptive adjective. This figure of 4,000 was identified again in *The Aberdeen Daily Journal* for the first Open held after World War One in 1920 at Royal Cinque Ports. It wrote, 'there was a large concourse, probably numbering 4,000 on the links, an exceptional number for this far away links and fifty per cent of the attendant spectators had come in cars'.⁴⁴ What is also interesting about this account is the reference to the remoteness of the course and clear suggestion that half the gallery travelled by car. They were clearly affluent given the choice of transport and tourists as they required cars to access the course in Deal,

³⁹ *The Morning Post*, 13 June 1894

⁴⁰ *South Wales Echo*, 7 June 1899

⁴¹ *The Times*, 14 May 1892

⁴² *The Times*, 20 May 1914

⁴³ *The Northern Whig*, 25 May 1914

⁴⁴ *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 2 July 1920

providing further evidence of the socially exclusive nature of these spectators. Two more factors appear to have influenced writers to estimate a figure to convey the sense of occasion. The first is the presence of royalty, ‘Among the crowd of 5,000 people was HRH Prince of Wales’.⁴⁵ The second was the victory of a British golfer, ‘[a crowd of] 4,000-5,000 spectators rushed wildly forward eager to congratulate and carry shoulder high the man who after eleven years had won the Open Championship for Britain’.⁴⁶ Unsurprisingly in the British press, comments were made on the influence of the weather on the gallery size. *The Sporting Life* in 1894 noted, ‘despite the weather, a large number of spectators followed the best-known players’.⁴⁷ More positively, the *Nottingham Evening Post* demonstrated the link between good weather and the impact it had in drawing crowds to watch: ‘It was a glorious day, the best of the week, and when the first of the competitors drove off spectators were pouring on to the links’.⁴⁸ More typically for the Ladies 1922 final at Sandwich, ‘when the players started [the crowd] was smaller than might have been expected, and most of the hundred or so people who left the first tee were armed with waterproofs or umbrellas’.⁴⁹

The prospect for the day’s play was another factor that influenced the press to comment on the crowd, as shown by the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* that noted, ‘although, the prospect was for a day of highly interesting golf, there were comparatively few on the links when play commenced, and the play was therefore followed in comfort’.⁵⁰ Alternatively at Royal St. Georges for the 1930 Walker Cup, ‘A crowd of 5,000 watched British chances peter out this afternoon until what at the interval we thought might be a fight, simply become a fiasco’.⁵¹ Certainly, the physical location of the links was deemed worthy of remark: ‘the distance of the links from the town and the uninviting weather deterred spectators; but still, a considerable number of enthusiasts followed, the cracks, over the links’.⁵² This report combines the relative remoteness of the course and the weather as disincentives but how the presence of the top players, the

⁴⁵ *Glasgow Herald*, 11 June 1932

⁴⁶ *Glasgow Herald*, 30 June 1934

⁴⁷ *The Sporting Life*, 12 June 1894

⁴⁸ *Nottingham Evening Post*, 10 June 1932

⁴⁹ *The Western Times*, 20 May 1922

⁵⁰ *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 29 June 1911

⁵¹ *The Scotsman*, 17 May 1930

⁵² *Glasgow Herald*, 12 June 1894

cracks, encouraged the crowd to attend in significantly large numbers. An article in *The Scotsman* on the 1929 Amateur Championship final informed its readers that, ‘the silence of remote Sandwich was broken by the applause of the 1,000 spectators’.⁵³

There was, however, clear evidence that The Opens held in Kent did not attract the same levels of spectators as other venues such as in Scotland or even the north-west of England. When J.H. Taylor became the first English professional to win in 1894, *The Lincolnshire Echo* observed, ‘there was a large attendance, but scarcely so great as might have been looked for on so important an occasion’.⁵⁴ This view was repeated in 1899, ‘The crowd at Sandwich is never a large one.’⁵⁵ On another occasion, praise was given but tempered, ‘the company was a large one, for Sandwich’.⁵⁶ Even the players recalled that at times, particularly when out of contention for the title, the crowds were absent. J.H. Taylor playing Sandwich in 1904 remembered ‘Bursts of occasional cheering reached my partner and me as we plodded along, solitary and alone, except for our caddies!’⁵⁷ Indeed, the greater popularity of the non-Kent venues was explicitly noted by *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, ‘the gathering in the afternoon had considerably increased, but it was below the attendance at St. Andrews, Prestwich or Hoylake on final days’.⁵⁸ Much of this appears to have been a case of possible bias in the Scottish press against the remote south-east English courses. *The Scotsman* in 1894 lamented, ‘there was not a great crowd of spectators [at Sandwich] to witness the play that there was at Hoylake, but there were sufficient onlookers to give, a gallery, to many players’.⁵⁹ This was followed the next time The Open visited Kent with *The Dundee Courier* offering, ‘Sandwich cannot command a company of spectators of any magnitude, and throughout yesterday the force of gallery was never felt by any of the players’.⁶⁰ This contrasts with the London based *Sporting Life* that wrote on the same day, ‘the prominent players drew large galleries from the spectators who thronged the

⁵³ *The Scotsman*, 17 June 1929

⁵⁴ *Lincolnshire Echo*, 13 June 1894

⁵⁵ *Golf Illustrated*, June 16 1899

⁵⁶ *Sunderland Daily Echo*, 4 June 1904

⁵⁷ Taylor, *Golf: My Life's Work*, 140

⁵⁸ *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 30 May 1908

⁵⁹ *The Scotsman*, 12 June 1894

⁶⁰ *Dundee Courier*, 8 June 1899

course'.⁶¹ An interesting twist to this theme is in evidence within *The Aberdeen Journal's* report on the 1900 Amateur Championship held at Sandwich when it compares the lack of crowd unfavourably with previous Scottish hosts of the event. This reflects the amateur disdain for crowds and particularly for unruly ones as Holt has confirmed:

The St. Andrews or the Prestwick crowd was absent at the start in the morning. Not more than a hundred gathered near the starter's box, and never during the two rounds did 300 assemble. A crowd perhaps is never very desirable at a golf contest, especially if it grows beyond control.⁶²

The reason for this prejudice in the Scottish press is most likely to be explained when one recognises that they were writing for their own home market who would have considered golf to be a wholly Scottish game. They still begrudged the hosting of major tournaments outside of Scotland. Their readership would have seen any competition, represented here by the size of the Kentish crowds, as a threat and a challenge to Scotland's historic ownership of golf. This would have encouraged the Scottish press to write tactfully for their readership and without fear of contradiction as there were no other sources available to conflict with their accounts.

Surviving images from the *Illustrated London News* (Figure 8.1) of the 1928 Open held at Royal St. George's do show several hundred spectators present around the green, watching Hagen putting.⁶³

⁶¹ *The Sporting Life*, 8 June 1899

⁶² Holt, *Sport and the British*, 145; *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 12 May 1900

⁶³ *London Illustrated News*, 19 May 1928



Figure 8.1: 1928 Open Walter Hagen Putting
(Illustrated London News, 19 May 1928)

Likewise, a photograph of the gallery, walking up a fairway at Prince's (Figure 8.2) displays a similar number of spectators that had been drawn to follow one of the key matches at the 1932 Open at Prince's GC.



Figure 8.2: 1932 Open Gallery Walking the Fairway
(Prince's GC, The Gallery)

Finally, an image of the gallery for the 1930 Walker Cup (Figure 8.3), also played at Royal St. George's, demonstrates the excellent use of the natural vantage points with the spectators crowded on to a hill overlooking the green.



Figure 8.3: 1930 Walker Cup Spectators at St. Georges

(Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

This reflects the popularity of amateur golf and the crowd's resourcefulness in the days before artificial grandstands were constructed. These reflections only represent a few of the surviving images that were taken at the time and cannot be assumed to be a definitive record of crowd numbers, but do help to illustrate the relative popularity and density of the galleries.

8.4 The Composition of the Kent Crowds

In terms of the composition of the galleries, the newspapers do provide some interesting accounts. However, a more robust evaluation has been undertaken by analysing the surviving images of the golf events, including a range of still and moving images. This investigation has identified the makeup in terms of the ratio of men to women. Also, identification of the clothing they wore has given some signs on the social status of the spectators. The attraction of golf as a game for women was that skill, more than strength was an essential requirement, and by 1893 the LGU had been formed.⁶⁴ An implication of this is that, in playing terms, women were present on the links before the first Open Championship was held in Kent. Thus they could reasonably be expected to be seen in the galleries, even if Wann et al. say that women were usually underrepresented as sports spectators.⁶⁵ This position, of course, mirrors broader patterns in society as

⁶⁴ Robert Browning, *A History of Golf: The Royal and Ancient Game*, (London: A&C Black Ltd, 1955), 124

⁶⁵ Wann et al, *Sports Fans*, 24

regardless of the consumption of sport and cultural activities during this era of masculine hegemony, class and knowing one's place were undoubtedly important in British golf in this period, as is illustrated by Walter Hagen's experience when practising before the 1920 Open at Royal Cinque Ports. Hagen, already the US Open champion, on his first visit to Britain, was asked to leave the locker (changing) rooms by the steward as professionals were not allowed in the clubhouse. Professionals had to change in the golf shop, but instead, Hagen used his car parked by his driver in front of the clubhouse as a dressing room to change into his golfing shoes.⁶⁶ By this act of defiance, Hagan highlights the different attitudes between British and American golf in terms of class and the status of professionals.

The report on the 1892 Amateur Championship in *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, confirmed and celebrated the presence of women in the gallery at Sandwich: 'it was wonderful to see the large crowd of onlookers composed not only of men but also ladies, following the final between Mr Ball and Mr Laidlay'.⁶⁷ The illustration of the 1894 Open Championship at Sandwich in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* (Figure 8.4) noticeably shows a fair proportion of women watching the golf at the first Open held in England.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Walter Hagen, *The Walter Hagen Story* (London: Heinemann, 1957), 60/61

⁶⁷ *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 21 May 1892

⁶⁸ *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 23 June 1894

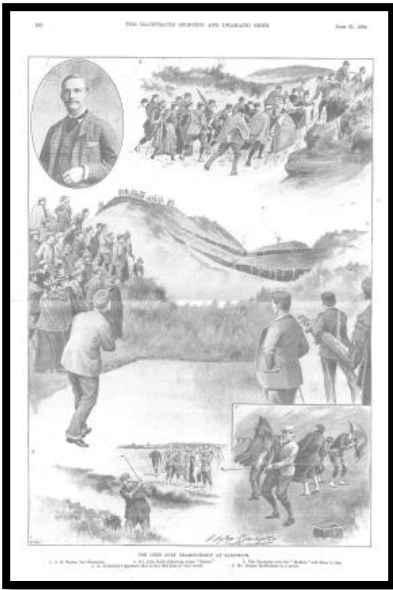


Figure 8.4: 1894 Open Sandwich
(*Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 23 June 1894)

A more recent image, taken from a *British Movietone* clip of the 1932 Open at Prince's (Figure 8.5) shows a mix of genders in the crowd around the final green, giving the winner Gene Sarazen some polite applause as he finishes his winning round.⁶⁹



Figure 8.5: 1932 Open Prices Crowd watch Sarazen Putt
(*British Movietone*, 1932)

⁶⁹ 67th Open – Prince's (1932), *British Movietone*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y92sUAudRgM>

Further evidence, even if somewhat of a derogatory and what might now be thought as a sexist nature, appeared in *The Times*: ‘At the 17th Mr Wethered hit his pitch off the extreme shank of his niblick, to send ladies screaming and men tumbling’.⁷⁰ In a similar vein, but acting quite sensibly, four-time Open Champion Walter Hagen in his biography remembers during one round at Deal in strong winds that, ‘the women were holding umbrellas over them as they passed the bunkers to prevent sand, grit and even pebbles from being blown into them’.⁷¹ These written accounts acknowledge the inclusion of women in the galleries. Another indication of the ratio of men to women, over the first three decades of the twentieth century, taken from three crowd images at the 1904, 1922 and 1932 Opens (Figures 8.6, 8.7 and 8.8) are pretty similar with almost 80% of the crowd made up of males.



Figure 8.6: 1904 Open Edwardian Crowd
(www.theopen.com/44thopen)

⁷⁰ *The Times*, 11 May 1923

⁷¹ Hagen, *The Walter Hagen Story*, 62



Figure 8.7: Open Crowd watch Walter Hagen
(*Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 1 July 1922)



Figure 8.8: Open Crowd watch Gene Sarazen
(www.golfdigest.com)

A final image (Figure 8.9) from Sandwich of the 1922 Ladies Amateur Open is harder to calculate with absolute accuracy but suggests a higher proportion of women were present. It can, therefore, be assumed that as this was the Ladies Amateur Open, this deviation from the norm is not to be unexpected, as peer groups have been identified as essential factors for sports fan socialisation.⁷²

⁷² Wann et al, *Sports Fans*, 24



Figure 8.9: 1922 Ladies Amateur Open Crowd

(*London Illustrated News*, 27 May 1922)

Previously published studies or newspaper articles have failed to address the social status or class of the galleries specifically, but the references in *The Aberdeen Daily Journal* to spectators attending the 1920 Open at Deal in cars does indicate the affluence of the galleries⁷³. This use of cars to distinguish class can also be applied to another movie clip of the 1932 Open at Prince's. It shows a row of motor-cars parked close to one of the greens as the players put out (Figure 8.10).



Figure 8.10: 1932 Open Parked Cars Behind Green

(www.golfchannel.com)

⁷³ *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 2 July 1920

According to the staff at the National Motor Museum, who were able to identify the cars' make and value, the cars were undoubtedly an expensive form of transport to own and use. The motor-cars included a Daimler which is shown in the 1932 Daimler brochure as models ranging in price from £550 to £1250. Another one is a large Morris, either a Major or Isis. Again as a guide, in 1932 these were listed between £210 and £350 depending on the model. Finally, the next two cars are Minervas, and these were Belgian cars of some quality for the discerning customer. According to the 1931 motor show guide in *Autocar* magazine, they sold at £490 for the chassis only or £550 with saloon body.⁷⁴ What stands out when considering these costs is that the average earnings of male workers were around £3 per week (£150 per year) in the UK in the 1930s.⁷⁵ As the twentieth century progressed the option of travelling by car increased particularly for the typical golfing spectator. The image from the 1932 Open is revealing as it helps to confirm the apparent wealth within the golfing gallery. Motor-cars enabled increased levels of golfing tourism to be undertaken by this particular section of spectators who could afford to own and use this expensive form of private transport.

Part of the difficulty in determining the proportion of men to women in the images is that a large number of men were wearing long coats that make it difficult to distinguish them from the women in their long skirts. Men's fashion in the 1920s was not known for its individualism. Men wore a suit with a flannel shirt, and most men did not deviate from these social uniforms. When the weather was cold, men wore overcoats that reached just below the knee.⁷⁶ By the 1930s, blazers and casual trousers were often worn in the summer as informal wear and sportswear; also knee-length plus fours with long knitted stockings, wool cap and two-tone leather brogues were popular for playing and watching golf.⁷⁷ For 1930s women's fashion, there was a trend towards what was termed a mannish look, that was applied to all forms of clothing, including outdoor wear.⁷⁸ By this decade the Norfolk jacket had become less common attire for men, though it had become a prevalent clothing item for women. With the winter coat that

⁷⁴ Patrick Collins, National Motor Museum Trust, Email correspondence (9 July 2018)

⁷⁵ Stephen Constantine, *Social Conditions in Britain 1908-1939* (London: Methuen, 1983), 18

⁷⁶ John Peacock, *Men's Fashion - The Complete Sourcebook* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1996), 125

⁷⁷ Peacock, *Men's Fashion*, 151

⁷⁸ Sara Marcketti and Emily Thomsen Angstman, 'The Trend for Mannish Suits in the 1930s,' *The Journal of the Costume Society of America* 39, no.2 (2013): 135-152

was a vital part of every woman's wardrobe, which stopped just below the knee, it added to the uncertainty.⁷⁹ Hats were also commonplace for men and women and through these some differentiation could be made. There were several styles of hats men had to choose from in the 1920s. A proper gentleman would not head outside without a hat. Homburgs, Trilbies and Panama Straw Boaters were most popular, but wool caps might be worn for sporting and leisure events. Lower classes could be seen wearing similar style, newsboy caps. This does make the analysis in terms of class much more difficult.⁸⁰ For women, the most common hats were the close-fitting hat, called cloche, which is French for the word bell, and women from all walks of life wore them.

As the 1920s progressed wide-brimmed garden sun hats with round crowns were the thing to wear outside.⁸¹ Further scrutiny of images, this time from the 1904 and 1932 Open Championships depict quite a stylish gallery with well-dressed men and women (Figures 8.6 and 8.8). The former image includes around twenty people, with the men having very prominent stiff white collars and a number sporting plus fours. The latter image reflects the 1930s with many in more casual sportswear including blazers and boaters. Whereas, the majority watching Hagen at Royal St. George's GC in 1922 are possibly more from the lower-middle-class (Figure 8.7) with more flat caps and less well-fitting suits in evidence.⁸² However, this can be deceptive given the similarities in dress between the classes and the number of men wearing long coats in these black and white photographs. This impression suggests that golf might have drawn a broad socio-economic group, although, with such a limited sample size of images, it is hardly a robust and valid exercise; however, it provides a fascinating snapshot.

Although the interpretation of the images needs to be treated with some caution. There is, however, much to suggest a further correlation between the images of women in the galleries and the likely class or social standing of the spectators. This is represented by

⁷⁹ Geraldine Biddle-Perry, 'Fashioning Social Aspiration: Lower-middle-class rational recreational leisure participation and the evolution of popular rational recreational leisure clothing,' PhD. Thesis, (University of the Arts London, 2010).

⁸⁰ Peacock, *Men Fashion*, 125

⁸¹ Kathleen Drowne and Patrick Huber, *The 1920s* (London: Greenwood Press, 2004), 110

⁸² Amelia Cimino, V&A Museum, Email correspondence (24 April 2018).

their mere presences, as for the working class or lower-middle-class, women were unlikely to have had the time to attend events like The Open. Boos highlights that for women life was a daily routine of drudgery comprising of hard, boring and repetitive chores, leaving very little time for social activities.⁸³ Furthermore, the lack of children in the images again suggests the women were of a status where they were not the main provider of childcare. Furthermore, if their children were of school-age they would have been in boarding school as the majority of the events were held in May, thus during term-time. If younger, children would have been in the care of nannies.

Finally, in this section reviewing those who attended The Open is a recognition that royal patronage was a frequent occurrence at The Opens held in Kent. Huggins has acknowledged the links between the British monarchy and modern sports regarding their frequent attendance from the nineteenth century at Cowes and Ascot.⁸⁴ The first account of a royal presence at The Open was in 1899 at Sandwich, when it was recorded that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York (George V) were present after the first round.⁸⁵ It was King Edward VII who became Patron of St. George's Club in 1902 and who soon confirmed the club's royal title on 17th May 1902.⁸⁶ However, it was a later Prince of Wales, briefly Edward VIII, who was the most frequent and committed golfer and spectator amongst the British royal family. He became captain of Royal St. George's in 1927.⁸⁷ The Prince's engagement with the Open was naturally widely reported with *The Glasgow Herald* describing how the Prince of Wales was an interested spectator during the final stages. *The Times* added that he had spent a considerable part of the day watching the tournament before presenting Walter Hagen with the Open championship trophy.⁸⁸ The Prince's interest in proceedings was included in books written by the two American golfers who keenly contested the final round in 1928 at Royal St. George's GC. Walter Hagen, the winner, recalled how, 'one of the crowd was HRH Prince of Wales, who followed me for most of the last nine holes'.⁸⁹

⁸³ Florence S Boos, *Memoirs of Victorian Working-Class Women: The Hard Way Up* (Springer International Publishing, 2017), 14

⁸⁴ Huggins, 'Sport and the British Upper Classes', 364-388.

⁸⁵ *Dundee Courier*, 8 June 1899

⁸⁶ Macpherson, *Golf's Royal Clubs*, 248

⁸⁷ Macpherson, *Golf's Royal Clubs*, 248

⁸⁸ *The Glasgow Herald*, 12 May 1928; *The Times*, 12 May 1928

⁸⁹ Hagen, *The Walter Hagen Story*, 173

The runner-up, Gene Sarazen, later wrote that while playing the 12th hole he noticed that a limousine was driving along with the Prince of Wales and Hagen sitting in the back. Hagen and the Prince had come out to see the progress of Hagan's chief rival.⁹⁰ Despite this association with these two American golfers, the Prince was present in 1930 to support the British team at The Walker Cup when the USA was the opposition, albeit the amateur American players rather than his professional friends. *The Times* stated, 'the fine weather brought out a stream of spectators and there really were a large number of people headed by the Prince of Wales'.⁹¹ While *The Scotsman* demonstrated his evident keenness to attend the match by noting, 'the Prince of Wales flew to Sandwich yesterday, to follow the play in the Walker Cup'.⁹² The enthusiastic involvement of the Prince of Wales and accounts of his support in the press further demonstrate the high position and social acceptance that golf was held in during the period.

8.5 The Interaction of the Kent Crowds

Having established who was watching the golf on the links of Kent, it is essential to gain an insight into the crowd's reaction and interaction to the events they witnessed. Sports fans as Guttman explains are dynamic participants, partisan, and eager to inspire with their cheers but were occasionally disorderly.⁹³ Events can stand for exciting, sophisticated and modernistic outcomes or experiences, in addition to the more practical economic and political ones.⁹⁴ Houlihan and Malcolm add to this by discussing how spectators enjoy a vicarious experience at sports events by effectively interacting with the players as the drama unfolds, and the game heads towards its climax.⁹⁵ Experience moves from noun to verb, with participants, spectators and even hosts

⁹⁰ Gene Sarazen, *Thirty Years of Championship* (Golf London: A&C Black, 1990), 135

⁹¹ *The Times*, 16 May 1930

⁹² *The Scotsman*, 16 May 1930

⁹³ Allan Guttman, 'Sports Crowds,' in, *Crowds*, ed. Jeffrey Thompson Schnapp and Matthew Tiews (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 111

⁹⁴ Donald Getz, *Event Studies; Theory, Research and Policy for Planned Events* 2nd Ed. (London: Routledge, 2012), 77

⁹⁵ Barrie Houlihan and Dominic Malcolm, *Sport and Society*, 3rd Ed. (London: Sage, 2016), 364

wanting to experience the event. What they experience varies for each party, but it can combine emotions and feelings with increased knowledge, through being there.⁹⁶ Frequently, especially today, this concept of experience is used for marketing and promotion. This is not a new practice, but it has recently been phrased as the, experience economy. It has been explored by Pine and Gilmour where they discuss how an event-goer's experience can be categorised as either passive participation, which includes entertainment or aesthetic experiences, or active experience, which is more of an education and escapism.⁹⁷ Sealy has postulated the emergence of three reasons for why spectators attend golf events; to see players succeed, to see them fail or to simply watch them play and to enjoy the spectacle.⁹⁸ Within the written media and contained in the books written by the players, there are numerous accounts of crowd behaviour and attitudes. These include examples and evidence of respectful, generous and enthusiastic support for the competitors, appreciating the good play on display, but also the sharing and, at times, creating the tension, drama and individual agonies of the action.

When J.H. Taylor won the first Open played in Kent at Sandwich in 1894, the *Edinburgh Evening News* described how he was loudly cheered on the home green when he finished his round.⁹⁹ The account of his victory as written in *The History of The Royal St. George's Golf Club* was even more colourful, recounting how Taylor's last round became a triumphant march, and he finished 'to the music of cheers'.¹⁰⁰ Ten years later, when Jack White won his only Open title at Sandwich, *The Scotsman* wrote about how he was 'heartily congratulated by the large gathering all-round the [last] green'. This level of keen support was taken up in *The Daily News* when describing how at the prize-giving, 'White was greeted by a spontaneous outburst of applause as he collected his £50 and the gold medal'.¹⁰¹ This showed how thoroughly popular had been his victory and how the crowd were eager to show their appreciation. In 1909 Taylor returned to his winning ways and retained great support amongst the crowd when he

⁹⁶ Getz, *Event Studies*, 190

⁹⁷ Getz, *Event Studies*, 192; Joseph Pine and James Gilmour, *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a stage* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999)

⁹⁸ Wendy Sealy, 'An Exploratory Study of Stakeholders' Perspectives of a Mega Event in Barbados – The Golf World Cup 2006', PhD Thesis, (Buckinghamshire New University, 2009).

⁹⁹ *Edinburgh Evening News*, 13 June 1894

¹⁰⁰ Furber, *A Course for Heroes*, 45

¹⁰¹ *The Scotsman*, 11 June 1904; *The Daily News*, 11 June 1904

won the first Open that was played on the links of Royal Cinque Ports, the second of the three courses to host the Championship in Kent. According to *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, ‘coming home, Taylor played beautifully...he never made a mistake, and amidst great cheers, he finished in 74 [shots]’.¹⁰² Taylor was obviously a crowd favourite, as at Royal St. George’s GC in 1922, *The Times* tells how the now fifty-one-year-old, five-time champion, ‘was setting the spectators shouting, laughing and almost crying with joy’.¹⁰³ Taylor went on to finish sixth just four shots behind the winner Hagen. Another Englishman, Henry Cotton, on his way to 1934 victory at Sandwich was rewarded for his great play on the green: ‘Cotton took his putter...and when he holed the putt for a four there was another cheer’.¹⁰⁴

It was not just the professional players who received this enthusiastic level of support. When in the final of the 1914 Amateur Golf Championship held at Royal St. George’s GC, the Irishman and eventual runner-up, Mr Hezlet, successfully chipped in from the bunker, *The Times* reported that ‘there was a shriek of “He’s holed it!” followed by an outbreak of cheers, whistles and cat-calls’.¹⁰⁵ Another Irishman, Lionel Munn, took on the American favourite Sweeny in the 1937 Amateur Final at Sandwich and courageously fought back at the end of the morning round, to make it a close match. *The Times* recounted how the home supporters reacted to this comeback: ‘the crowd broke into delirious cheering as Sweeny had not gathered as many “Rosebuds” as he might’.¹⁰⁶ The galleries on the Kent links were also noted to be empathetic to players who were not so successful in their play. At Sandwich in the 1904 Open, James Braid was in contention with three holes to play and the crowds gathered to witness the outcome. Unfortunately, for Braid, he was not victorious as *The Standard* testified, ‘he, however, could only manage three fours striking the lip of the hole on the last green which induced a large sigh from the crowd’.¹⁰⁷ Another dramatic Open occurred in 1920; Dobby in his history of Royal Cinque Ports writes how Abe Mitchell was leading after

¹⁰² *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 11 June 1909

¹⁰³ *The Times*, 24 June 1922

¹⁰⁴ *Lancashire Daily Post*, 29 June 1934

¹⁰⁵ *The Times*, 25 May 1914

¹⁰⁶ *The Times*, 30 May 1937

¹⁰⁷ *The Standard*, 11 June 1904

the first two rounds. However, when someone in the crowd shouted ‘Duncan has a 4 for a 69’ this unnerved Mitchell and his game deserted him and he squandered his 13 shot lead.¹⁰⁸ *The Scotsman* commentating on the same Open described the big crowd as being stupefied by Mitchell’s collapse before adding how another competitor, Wingate, let the occasion and the crowd unsettle him too, letting Duncan win the first Open held after World War One.¹⁰⁹ Duncan was involved in the closing stages of the 1922 Open, and he recalled in his autobiography how he was chasing Hagen for the title, and the crowd, at Sandwich, got very excited over the last two holes. ‘Thousands of people were tumbling out of tents, dashing from motor-cars [to watch the outcome.]’ Nevertheless, when Duncan’s par and tying putt on the 18th came up short, he remembered how ‘The crowd groaned.’¹¹⁰

This theme of tense excitement and crowd interaction is apparent in *The Times*’ coverage of the 1911 Open when the famous amateur golfer, Henry Hilton, challenged for his third title, some fourteen years after his and any amateur players’ last success. The possibility animated the Royal St. George’s GC crowd, ‘It is almost impossible to convey the agonized state of mind of the spectators...the glorious possibility of an amateur winning once again [Henry Hilton] was enough to send the crowd scampering across the course in the wildest excitement.’¹¹¹ Hilton was to finish in third place, behind Vardon and the Frenchman Massy who were tied after the four rounds. However, this result was not confirmed before further theatre had taken place, ‘At this point reports came of great play on the part of Massy, and the exhausted spectators rushed out once more to find the Frenchman’.¹¹² This epic finish was taken up by *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*: ‘There was excitement over the first three days, but a max was reached on the Thursday, which was marked by surprise after surprise. No wonder people [the crowd] were moved, as they had probably never been moved before at a championship’.¹¹³ These reports demonstrate the high level of support that the crowd must have had for these two former champions, Hilton as an

¹⁰⁸ Dobby, *Royal Cinque Ports*, 42

¹⁰⁹ *The Scotsman*, 2 July 1920

¹¹⁰ George Duncan, *Golf at the Gallop*, (London: Sporting Handbooks, 1951), 58

¹¹¹ *The Times*, 30 June 1911

¹¹² *The Times*, 30 June 1911

¹¹³ *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 8 July 1911,

amateur and Massy as a foreign player in their respective quests to prevail over the field of British professionals once more. Two episodes exemplify the pressure of the crowd and their expectations on even the greatest of players. It was noted in his biography, how the five-times champion J.H. Taylor admitted to being affected by the presence of the crowd and how he let it impact on his play when competing in the 1893 Open at Prestwick. However between then and the 1894 Open at Sandwich, he had played in more events and was comfortable playing in front of the galleries, allowing him to play his best and collect his first title.¹¹⁴

The second example of the pressure of the crowd was in 1934, where Henry Cotton was aiming for his first championship victory and had the added pressure of becoming the first Englishman to win the Open after a decade of American dominance. Cotton had played outstandingly over the first three rounds at Sandwich and had a 10-shot lead, and the expectant home crowd were sure that he was poised to win. However, upon reaching the first tee before the final round, Cotton was told there would be a 15-minute delay and so, as a result, Cotton decided to sit alone in a nearby tent. When the time came for him to start, he had become tense and anxious and unable to swing with his previous freedom. The situation was not helped by the crowd, who were equally anxious and were vocal in trying to encourage him after he had dropped shots over the first five holes. At the sixth hole Cotton turned to the spectators and according to the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, pleaded 'let me alone'.¹¹⁵ Cotton recovered his nerve and settled the crowd, birdieing the thirteenth hole before finishing confidently and winning by five shots.¹¹⁶ A link between the two episodes was chronicled in J.H. Taylor's autobiography when he wrote, 'I am not likely to forgive or forget Cotton for the agonies he caused me and members of a very large and excited gallery that followed him during his final round'.¹¹⁷ These two incidents clearly show the impact even the most supportive crowd can have on a player. Viewing golf could also be hazardous for the spectators, as the *Derby Daily Telegraph* testified when reporting on the singles match between the two

¹¹⁴ Taylor, *Taylor on Golf*, 23

¹¹⁵ *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 30 June 1934

¹¹⁶ Peter Dobereiner, *Maestro: The Life of Sir Henry Cotton* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1993), 123-4

¹¹⁷ Taylor, *Golf: My Life's Work*, 43

captains Bobby Jones and Roger Wethered at the 1930 Walker Cup: ‘There was a sensational opening to the homeward half. At the tenth-hole Wethered sliced his drive and it went among the crowd. A spectator received the full force of the ball and was rendered unconscious for about a minute.’¹¹⁸ This was not an isolated incident and *The Evening Telegraph* tells how in 1934 at Sandwich another champion on his way to the title was wayward with his play: ‘Cotton’s second to the first hole hit a spectator’.¹¹⁹

There were, of course, many celebrated players who had become crowd favourites and who were of particular interest to the crowd; as Wann et al. remind us, it is common for spectators to elevate some players to hero status, above the mere mortals in the field.¹²⁰

This case was demonstrated in *The Scotsman* that noted when playing Sandwich in 1894, ‘Mr Ball naturally attracted a good deal of attention.’ Ball was the holder of the Amateur Championship, which he had won for the fourth time, he was to go onto win it a record eight times, and he also won the 1890 Open Championship at Prestwick.¹²¹

Similarly, *The Times* when reporting on the 1899 Open at Sandwich informed its readers, ‘naturally the play of Harry Vardon attracted a considerable amount of attention and the spectators were treated to a splendid exhibition of the game’.¹²² Whereas at Deal

in 1920, James Braid clearly appealed to many female fans: ‘Braid seemed rather frightened on the greens...and those faithful ladies, who follow him around with dog-like devotion and pathetic eye, suffered severely yesterday’.¹²³ The amateur golfer was awarded pseudo-royal status, by the golfing galleries: ‘Wethered tapped his ball to the lip of the hole to win the title and stepped into his kingdom amid the acclamations of his subjects [the 1923 crowd at Deal]’.¹²⁴ *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*

recognised the acclaim received by the 1938 Champion winning at Royal St. George’s GC: ‘a more popular win than Reginald Whitcombe’s there could not have been and the prolonged plaudits at the presentation of the cup were a tribute’.¹²⁵ This was Whitcombe’s fourteenth attempt to win The Open, and the account reflects how, as Fox

¹¹⁸ *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 16 May 1930

¹¹⁹ *The Evening Telegraph*, 29 June 1934

¹²⁰ Wann et al., *Sports Fans*, 69

¹²¹ *The Scotsman*, 12 June 1894

¹²² *The Times*, 8 June 1899

¹²³ *The Times*, 1 July 1920

¹²⁴ *The Times*, 14 May 1923

¹²⁵ *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 15 July 1938

identifies, the underdog is automatically and instinctively adopted by the British crowd as an extension of the desire to see justice in all elements of life, including sport.¹²⁶

8.6 Displays of Banal and Hot Nationalism at the Golf in Kent.

The galleries certainly favoured their heroes and on occasions demonstrated great patriotic, or as Billig describes it, ‘Banal Nationalism’ support for the home players. Yet equally, there are many accounts of the spectators displaying support for the leading American greats, who played in the Opens.¹²⁷ These statements demonstrate that Billig’s notion of a shared sense of national belonging to the homeland was most undoubtedly present, but also that the knowledgeable Kent crowd exhibited a general British sense of equitable treatment. Steen describes the former as the Us Syndrome, and adds that while nationalism is problematic, ‘it gives us a good excuse for some damn fine sport’.¹²⁸ Bishop and Jaworski develop this further arguing that the role of national identity, the nation and nationalism is always relevant when international sporting events are witnessed.¹²⁹ One of the most prominent times for spectators to be so supportive is when patriotic pride and passion is involved. This actual or metaphorical form of flag-waving, as Billig describes it, supports C.L.R. James’ notion that sport is never only about sport, but has wider cultural and political undertones.¹³⁰ However, the support demonstrated for the American and international visitors are examples of what Bell terms, ‘meritocratic-based celebrity’ for which sport is particularly good at creating, regardless of their country of origin.¹³¹ As Dumitriu

¹²⁶ Kate Fox, *Watching the English: The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2005), 249

¹²⁷ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, (London: Sage, 1995), 6

¹²⁸ Steen, *Floodlights and Touchlines*, 278

¹²⁹ Hywel Bishop and Adam Jaworski, ‘We beat “em”: nationalism and the hegemony of homogeneity in the British press,’ *Discourse & Society* 14, No. 3 (2003): 243-271

¹³⁰ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 120; CLR James, *Beyond a Boundary*, (London: The Sportsman Book Club, 1964), 11

¹³¹ Barbara Bell, *Sport Studies* (Exeter: Learning Matters, 2009), 54

highlights, ultimately, people relate to national identities and celebrities, as they both trigger feelings of emotional engagement.¹³²

When J.H. Taylor won in 1894 at Sandwich, he was immensely popular, as the first Englishman to win the Open Championship.¹³³ It was also the first time The Open had been held outside of Scotland and Furber noted, not surprisingly, ‘Taylor was a favourite of the crowd who saw him as the first English professional capable of beating the Scottish supremacy’. Taylor himself recalled that ‘while playing the closing holes a good number of spectators had arrived to see me finish’.¹³⁴ Equally, when Cotton was aiming for victory at Royal St. George’s GC in 1934, his nationality was a factor in the crowd support. Even though Cotton had become the professional at the Royal Waterloo club in Belgium, Furber penned, ‘[Cotton] was nonetheless every inch an Englishman and had brought back a smile to the thousands who followed him over the three days’.¹³⁵ *The Yorkshire Post* also demonstrated this patriotic swell of support, ‘the prospect of this British victory brought to the course today a large crowd of English enthusiasts who were eager to see for themselves whether Cotton could prevail’.¹³⁶

Again, it was not just when watching the professionals play that patriotic passions were present within the galleries; the newspapers clearly stoked this sentiment with their potentially provocative description of the non-British participant. Bernard Darwin as *The Times* golf correspondent provided this piece on the 1914 Amateur Championships at Sandwich, as if he were reporting on a battle not a game of golf:

The 17th caused every patriot in the crowd to shudder audibly as Tubbs played a host of poor shots to lose the hole to his American opponent. Then, amid the whispered prayers of the crowd, Tubbs managed to win on the 18th green. The spectators were divided in their feelings, they sympathised with the vanquished but recognised that a real menace to having a British winner had been removed.¹³⁷

¹³² Diana-Luiza Dumitriu, ‘Media Construction of Sport Celebrities as National Heroes,’ *Romanian Journal of Communication and Public Relations* 20, No. 2 (2018): 21-33

¹³³ *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 23 June 1894

¹³⁴ Furber, *A Course for Heroes*, 43-44

¹³⁵ Furber, *A Course for Heroes*, 95

¹³⁶ *Yorkshire Post*, 29 June 1934

¹³⁷ *Ibid*

He went on in an even more war-like tone, ‘the match saw the American invader defeated but only after a gallant fightback to lose at the last’.¹³⁸ The ultimate and understandable cause of patriotic or Banal Nationalism support comes in sporting events between teams representing their countries. The importance and intensity are magnified, particularly for the British media and by extension the spectator, on account of the cultural significance that sport represents for a country that considers itself to be the home of organised sport.¹³⁹ For men’s amateur golf this is the Walker Cup; the 1930 event was held at Royal St. George’s. The teams were captained by two of the most famous amateur golfers of all time, George Wethered of England and Bobby Jones from the USA. As was the tradition, the two captains competed against each other. *The Times* wrote, ‘they were all square at the turn and the [home] crowd rejoiced loudly, unaware of the impending doom as Jones won three of the next four holes scoring 4, 3, 3 and 3’.¹⁴⁰ This dominance by Jones was symptomatic of the match, ‘a crowd of 5,000 watched British chances peter out this afternoon until what at the interval we thought might be a fight, simply become a fiasco’.¹⁴¹ The result of the match saw the USA win ten matches to just two games by the British and Irish team.

This anti-American, Union Flag-waving sentiment was not omnipresent and the Kent crowds recognised and wholly supported three of the greatest American golfers in the inter-war era. When Walter Hagen won his third Open Championship, there was a clear sign of him winning over the local crowd. When writing about his career, Hagen acknowledged that he had received acclaim for winning in 1924 at Hoylake, but his 1928 win at Sandwich ‘was greeted by increased warmth and sincerity, with applause, cheering and words of congratulations and eager smiles from huge galleries that followed him around’. As his final round in that year progressed, he wrote, ‘I began to pick up a bigger gallery...they came streaming after me, calling out my name and giving me reports of my competitors.’¹⁴² Even in the intensity of the Walker Cup, *The*

¹³⁸ *The Times*, 21 May 1914

¹³⁹ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 122

¹⁴⁰ *The Times*, 17 May 1930

¹⁴¹ *The Scotsman*, 17 May 1930

¹⁴² Hagen, *The Walter Hagen Story*, 171-172

Belfast Newsletter acknowledged that, ‘the idol of American golf, Bobby Jones, drew the largest gallery and delighted the crowd by the magnificence of his shots’.¹⁴³ Finally, the third American star to excite and win over the English crowd was Gene Sarazen. When he won The Open in 1932, on the only occasion it was played at Prince’s GC, the *Aberdeen Press and Journal* wrote, ‘The new champion [Sarazen] has always been popular with the crowds because of his cheery and modest bearing.’¹⁴⁴ *The Courier and Advertiser* added, ‘even the most biased partisan must admit the merit of the performance’.¹⁴⁵ *The Yorkshire Post* helps to explain further why he was so popular: ‘Sarazen’s geniality and his sporting attitude have always endeared him to a British crowd.’ It was also evidenced by the paper printing a transcript of his victory speech when Sarazen proclaimed, ‘I think your British golf crowds are wonderful...both on and off the course hundreds of people told me that if one of your men could not succeed they wanted me to win. I was never hustled or jostled and not once had I to ask them to stand back. Their sporting spirit was wonderful.’¹⁴⁶ It was not just North American golfers that the Kent crowd were seen to cheer for; in 1928, the Argentinian Jose Jurado led after two rounds at Sandwich and was still in contention after the third, before falling away somewhat. *The Times* noted this support and wrote, ‘the hero of Tuesday took away with him a large and adoring crowd’.¹⁴⁷

One alternative, but a more personal source of primary data supports the fascination that the American and foreign players held for the spectator are the inclusion of an extract from the private diary of Alexander Ruthven Pym. His style was concise and factual, rather than the analytical and speculative nature found in contemporary newspapers. The most relevant entries for the events at the 1928 Open at Sandwich were:

Mon 7th May - A fine day but a cold east wind. The first Qualifying round.
Americans did well and also Jurado from Argentina.

Wed 9th May - Fine but pretty cold. Americans did very well, Merlthon, Sarazen and Hagen.

¹⁴³ *Belfast Newsletter*, 17 May 1930

¹⁴⁴ *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 11 June 1932

¹⁴⁵ *The Courier and Advertiser*, 11 June 1932

¹⁴⁶ *Yorkshire Post*, 11 June 1932

¹⁴⁷ *The Times*, 10 May 1928

Thurs 10th May - Fine day. Three Americans and Jurado at the top.

Fri 11th May - Another lovely day. Hagen won and Sarazen second.¹⁴⁸

In general, therefore, it seems that nationalism, in banal or more, hot forms, was more often stoked up by the team competition. In contrast, when individuals were representing their countries in international tournaments, it was significantly diluted. Overall, these examples strengthen the idea that there are, as Sealy reminds us, three motivations for spectators to attend golfing events: to see players win, to see them lose or to watch and enjoy all players regardless of the result.¹⁴⁹ To Sealy's list, this thesis can add a fourth reason, to support their country.

8.7 The Behaviour of the Kent Crowds

The relationship between sports spectators and society is referred to as fandom and it has been heavily researched and many definitions exist. Wann et al. conclude that it can be defined as a culture or subculture and it comprises of individuals who attend and watch sporting contests. They contend that they are also known as direct sports consumers and through their actions, become part of the event. By becoming absorbed by the contest, they can impact on and influence the event through their interactions, including their mere presence but more critically by cheering or barracking of the players.¹⁵⁰ More recently, Getz has christened these kinds of spectators as sport junkies with cricket's Barmy Army as a contemporary example.¹⁵¹ Crawford notes that early sports spectators were sometimes viewed as deviant, frenzied or hysterical. Rogan Taylor adds that football spectators were often stigmatized, but this could apply to the supporters at any sporting event who were not conforming to the accepted social norms,

¹⁴⁸ Alexander Ruthven Pym, *The Diary of Alexander Ruthven Pym 1928*, (Kent History and Library Centre).

¹⁴⁹ Sealy, 'An Exploratory Study of Stakeholders.'

¹⁵⁰ Wann et al, *Sports Fans*, 3

¹⁵¹ Donald Getz, 'Sports event tourism: Planning, development and marketing,' in *Sports and Adventure Tourism*, ed. S. Hudson (New York: Hayworth Hospitality Press, 2003), 49-88.

beliefs and attitudes.¹⁵² All sports have rules of play and also unwritten rules that outline the etiquette that not only players and likewise spectators must abide by.¹⁵³ Those fans that do not, according to Wann et al. are known as cultural dopes.¹⁵⁴

The liberal support for all players and in particular those who displayed captivating characteristics was further recognised in a series of reports. It also recognised that the Kent crowds were extremely knowledgeable and often better behaved than those who frequented some of the other Open venues. The contrast between the 1894 Open Championship held in Sandwich and the 1894 Amateur Championship that was played on the links at Hoylake (now Royal Liverpool GC) is revealing. Before a ball was struck *The Manchester Courier* pleaded, ‘We trust that the crowd will be able to put more restraint upon themselves than was shown at the recent meeting at Hoylake and endeavour to control their excitement when a critical part of the game is reached.’¹⁵⁵ This theme was echoed by *The Scotsman* once play had commenced, ‘there was not a great crowd of spectators to witness the play that there was at Hoylake. The advantage was that many of them were golfers, or, at least, had some idea of the game, which could not be said of the gathering which witnessed the Amateur Championships at Hoylake’.¹⁵⁶ It appears that the crowd at Hoylake had been very unmanageable. Two independent reports depict the events, firstly, ‘the final was witnessed by a crowd estimated at no less than 4,000 persons, who, truth to tell, slightly interfered with the play...a long rope to keep the crowd back was carried forward in a semi-circle by sailors,’ and secondly, ‘the excitement was piling up with a vengeance and the huge crowd was at this point somewhat difficult to manage’.¹⁵⁷ Even after The Open had been held on the Kent courses on several further occasions, the behaviour and knowledge of the Kent crowd remained positive and praiseworthy. This was recognised in 1911 by *Golf Illustrated*, ‘Where they came from I do not know, but here [Sandwich] there is no need for a force of policemen.’ The merits of the crowd was further

¹⁵² Garry Crawford, *Consuming Sport Fans, sport and culture* (London: Routledge 2004)19-20; Rogan Taylor, *Football and its Fans* (Leicester: Leicester University 1992)

¹⁵³ Fox, *Watching the English*, 242

¹⁵⁴ Wann et al, *Sports Fans*, 21

¹⁵⁵ *Manchester Courier*, 12 June 1894

¹⁵⁶ *The Scotsman* 12 June 1894

¹⁵⁷ *Manchester Courier*, 1 May 1894; *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic New*, 5 May 1894

emphasised, ‘a huge crowd was expected [for the play-off] but instead a good and extremely orderly and intelligent crowd were present’. The editor then speculated, ‘if the match had been played at St. Andrews or Hoylake, the size and quality of the crowd might be different’.¹⁵⁸

To summarise this theme, the esteemed golf writer Henry Longhurst wrote in *The Tatler*: ‘I do not think a better-conditioned course than Royal St. George’s exists in Britain at the time. The crowds were well mannered and very admirably controlled by a selection of stewards who mingled firmness and politeness in a degree that has often been lacking at other events’.¹⁵⁹ These newspaper accounts show that for over forty years there were consistently good stories written about the Kent crowd’s high standards of etiquette. This strongly suggests that the Kent or the Southern golf fan was more refined than their counterpart in the north-west or in Scotland. A further indication for this position is that these views were reflected in the accounts written by the Northern and Scottish journalists and, considering Coakley and Pike’s theories on how the press frequently shape the narrative for its primary audience, they must echo the truth.

8.8 Catering for the Kent Crowds

Three further examples add to the narrative about the spectator experience at The Open and help to illustrate the costs associated with attending the golf and the broader services on offer. Firstly, this includes the recognition that the spectators were catered for in terms of the availability of refreshments. *The Dundee Advertiser* recounted that at The Open at Sandwich in 1894, ‘luncheon tents have been erected’, but it does not expand in any detail as regards the catering arrangements.¹⁶⁰ Whereas, the records in the Royal St. George’s archives are more enlightening regarding the access to the catering and the cost of food at The 1938 Open. The records show that luncheon was provided in a Member’s Tent, but this was only for members and their guests who were holding temporary members’ passes. So this suggests these refreshments were not available to

¹⁵⁸ *Golf Illustrated*, July 7 1911

¹⁵⁹ *The Tatler*, 11 July 1934

¹⁶⁰ *Dundee Advertiser*, 12 June 1894

the general public. The tickets for luncheon were available at 3s. 6d. per person and that tea was 1s. 6d. per person. The combination of the exclusivity and the cost reflect the privileged position and socio-economic status enjoyed by the members. Secondly, for those who travelled by car, the archives reveal that once again the members received preferential treatment. Their motor-cars were parked for free, on the production of a Member's Badge, in the field known as the Running Green. Whereas, the parking arrangements for non-members' saw cars diverted to the farm entrance on the left of the Sandown Road, some 600 yards before reaching the club. Unfortunately, no record of the costs associated with non-member car parking is recorded, but there was no suggestion that it was free.¹⁶¹

Thirdly, the opportunity to sell golf-related equipment to the captive-niche market was realised with the first Exhibition Tent, the forerunner of what is now called the Tented Village, being erected at the 1909 Open in Deal. Within the Exhibition Tent, the manufacturers and retailers could display their products and wares to the public.¹⁶² *The Citizen* proclaimed it 'an astounding attraction' and that 'the success has induced the promoters (The Golf Agency Edinburgh and London) to make it a permanent feature at the championship gatherings.' There were prizes for many of the fine exhibits and gold medals were given in each section in addition to handsome money awards.¹⁶³ By 1911 *Golf Illustrated* recognised the impact of this commercial venture informing its readers, 'there were now two sides of the Open, the playing and the business.' The Open was an important time to launch one hundred and one things. Clubs, balls, clothing and other equipment needed for the upkeep of the course and the periodical highlighted that 'thousands of pounds were spent annually'.¹⁶⁴ From the same article, it is clear that psychological marketing strategies were already in evidence with sales-people dressed in military uniform on-hand promoting the new Colonel golf ball. Golfing clothing was also available with two recognisable modern-day brands present: 'Burberry's golfing suits and coats being much admired and Jaeger had a nice stall, and their Shetland wool

¹⁶¹ Luncheon Menu and Price List; Parking Regulations. 1938 Open Championship File, The Royal St. George's Golf Club,

¹⁶² Murray, *The British Open*, 29

¹⁶³ *The Citizen*, 12 June 1909

¹⁶⁴ *Golf Illustrated*, 14 July 1911

vests were much sought after.’¹⁶⁵ A brand and product that has not survived was Gripolin. Gripolin was advertised as a new preparation for the hands, it was claimed to be better than pitch or any other kind of wax and was a product used by golfers to stop their club slipping in their hands in an era before the invention of the golf glove. This demonstrates that the golf suppliers had already identified that the galleries had sufficient disposable income, after all the expenses incurred in attending the golf, to invest in new equipment and apparel and further suggests the relative wealth of the clientele. Finally, the close relationship with the railways is evidenced by the SERC having representation within the tent answering enquires and looking after all the railway-related arrangements for the exhibitors.¹⁶⁶ The inclusion of this merchandising venture was not always a total success, for in 1938 a massive storm blew across the Kent Coast on the night before the final two rounds at Royal St. George’s GC.¹⁶⁷ This destroyed the Exhibition Tent (Figure 8.11) and scattered the merchandise across the fairways and even onto the adjoining Prince’s GC as *The Times* described, ‘gale force winds ripped apart the large exhibition tent and scattered debris for a mile around’.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ *Golf Illustrated*, 14 July 1911

¹⁶⁶ *Golf Illustrated*, 14 July 1911

¹⁶⁷ *Daily Herald*, 9 July 1938

¹⁶⁸ *The Times*, 9 July 1938



Figure 8.11: 1938 Damaged Exhibition Tent
(Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

This loss of equipment and the forfeit of income on the final day would have impacted on the profit the vendors would have anticipated, who together as the Golf and Allied Trades Exhibitors had paid £200 to erect their 200' x 60' marquee.¹⁶⁹ Notwithstanding this unfortunate episode, the Tented Village has become synonymous with The Open and part of the visitor experience for all attendees. The provision of these Tented Villages represented the real extent of commercialisation at The Open and contrasts with the mass-sponsorship that is now associated with modern-day Open Championships. For instance, even The Open programmes produced during the inter-war years are without reference to sponsors and simply acknowledge that the income raised from the sale of the programmes will be given to charity.

8.9 Conclusion

The most significant finding to emerge from this chapter is that between 1892 and 1938 thousands of people took part in what Zauhar called spectatorism, travelling by train and car to watch the golfing championships held on the golf links of East Kent.¹⁷⁰ The

¹⁶⁹ Dobby, *Royal Cinque Ports*, 76

¹⁷⁰ Zauhar, 'Historical perspectives of sports tourism', 5-101

research shows that these courses were situated on prime golf-links land, but not in densely populated areas or necessarily in an area of the country with a vibrant sporting pedigree. However, the relative proximity to London and the excellent transport links provided an enthusiastic golfing community that had adopted the East Kent seaside links to be their weekend golfing home. They had become accustomed to travelling to play golf in Kent and thus were equally at ease visiting and staying there to watch the various championships as they unfolded.

Although the specific crowd numbers cannot be categorically verified, and even if they were regularly reported to be lower than at the Opens when held in Scotland or Lancashire, the crowds clearly supported the Championships in healthy numbers. They were able to create an atmosphere and a sense of occasion and the findings of this chapter provide exciting insights into these golfing tourists who involved themselves in what Pine and Gilmour termed passive participation.

One of the main goals was to determine who attended the events and according to the wide variety of sources investigated, the overwhelming majority in the galleries were men. Yet, they were undoubtedly not male-only bastions compared with images of other sporting crowds from the period with a noticeable number of women being present, supplementing if not matching the number of men at the golf. The theoretical implications of these findings were that passive golf tourism was accessible for these women in terms of being more time liberated and therefore were able to watch the tournaments. Further evidence from this study suggests that the galleries were mainly drawn from the upper and upper-middle classes. This status was highlighted by their attire, the examples of the costs associated with attending the events and markedly by the presence of the expensive cars that cost considerably more than the annual salary of the average working man. The ultimate and crowning example of golfing fandom was the regular patronage by the Prince of Wales. His presence was recognition and acceptance that watching golf was a legitimate and no longer a deviant activity at a time when spectatorism was considered by some not to be the done thing. Likewise, the reporting on his attendance in the press would have further sought to promote this change in attitude and also to encourage broader participation in golf generally. An important contribution to this experience commenced at the 1909 Open held at Royal

Cinque Port GC and was a growing leisure-shopping experience, with the presence of the Exhibition Tent selling all manner of golfing goods to the captive golfing audience.

This thesis has demonstrated that the galleries were undoubtedly very engaged in their support for the players who took part. The Kent crowds not only witnessed some historic golfing moments but cheered for and suffered with the players be they male, female, professional, amateur, British or American who made these occasions happen. The rapturous support for the victors was recorded and this was particularly pronounced if they were English or later on, British, demonstrating a level of Banal Nationalism or a keen patriotic persuasion. Yet, they were equally strong to adopt and support some of the greatest American invaders who crossed the Atlantic in the inter-war years to play and win The Open. The actions and support of the crowd have been seen to motivate the players to succeed and play their best, but also to intimidate the players and on occasions affecting the outcome of some events which supports the theories of Wann et al. on fandom.¹⁷¹ One interesting finding was how it was frequently recognised that the Kent crowd were extremely knowledgeable and well behaved, displaying the attributes of fair play and outstanding etiquette towards all players at a level above, and not witnessed at all of the other championship courses.

¹⁷¹ Wann et al, *Sport Fans*, 3

Chapter 9

Conclusion

9. Conclusion

‘Can you recommend me a good place for a holiday in August? Must be really good golf, with an ‘open to visitors’ meeting on one of the weeks. The ladies would want to play on the long links, being good players.’¹

During the closing decades of the late nineteenth century and indeed up until the 1940s, British society grappled with a range of socio-economic and cultural changes. The period was located at the junction of societal fears around changing concepts of class and the role and participation of women in the public sphere generally and, more particularly, in sport. The south-east of England was frequently in the vanguard of this complex societal environment with momentous changing times, beliefs and values.² Against this background, golf tourism on the South Coast evolved through a sequence of interrelated events over time. The catalyst for golf tourism ranged from the golf boom in the 1890s, the creation of the first public municipal courses in England at Bournemouth either side of the turn of the twentieth century, to the growth in the nouveau riche and the social and cultural advances in opportunities for women and middle-class men after World War One. Furthermore, the increased levels of marketing of holiday destinations by the railway companies in the 1920s and 1930s, often in partnership with the elevated levels of entrepreneurship displayed by the resorts during the same period, which included the hosting of golf competitions for amateur players, all helped to shape the image, leisure patterns and habits of British life. Alongside these supply factors, taking a holiday from work had become a legal right and not a privilege by 1938 and this helped to soften the socio-demographic constraints that had anchored the opportunity to partake in golf tourism in the 1880s, when the timeframe of my studies commenced.

No study of a particular sport can ever provide a complete history of its development and the broader social and economic environment within which it functions. However, this unique study makes a major contribution to filling the gap in the historiography of

¹ *Golf*, 29 June 1900

² Paul Thompson, *The Edwardians: The Remaking of British Society* (London: Routledge, 1992), 180

golf tourism on the South Coast. It provides an understanding of both who and why this group played and attended sporting (golfing) events as part of this sport revolution, as Tranter recommended be undertaken.³ It delivers the first comprehensive assessment of the subject at a regional case study level, answering several essential questions, providing some significant new insights before suggesting areas for future research in this field.

Firstly, this study has argued that there was a Push-Pull effect that accelerated the development of golf tourism on the South Coast. Several prominent enablers, the railway companies, hoteliers, local authorities and golf clubs from Kent to Dorset, were the drivers and dominant influencers in recognising the latent demand for golf tourism. They were quick to identify that they stood to benefit from catering for this growing trend, acting as individual bodies or in formal and informal partnership. Some partnerships operated as examples of horizontal integration where independent enablers from different sectors worked together to provide golf tourism solutions. Examples include the golf clubs advertising local hotels within their club handbooks or the Southern Railway's *Golf in the South* that identified the two hundred and thirty-two courses that were accessible from the network. Whereas my thesis also shows instances of diversification or where vertical integration occurred, notably when the railway companies built their own hotels to accommodate their golfing passengers, most conspicuously the Imperial Hotel at Hythe.

With regard to accessible and empowering transport, firstly the railway companies, later motor-car drivers and on occasions shipping firms sailing to the Isle of Wight or France, all had a pivotal influence on enabling the golfing tourist to access the courses for participation or passive purposes. Nalder has previously recognised the influence of railways and their contribution by allowing cheaper, faster and safer access to Britain's golfing links.⁴ Yet, it is not too strong to suggest that without the railways, golf tourism would not have spread so quickly, to so many places or been so popular at the south-east seaside courses. Economics and profit were at the centre of their motivation even when encouraging travel to golf courses on the continent. Initially, the private

³ Tranter, *Sport, economy and society in Britain*, 95

⁴ Nalder, *Golf and the Railway Connection*, 17

companies simply catered for this emerging fashion through providing the means of conveyance, but later they proactively developed this trend as a business opportunity, using golf tourism as a lever to generate additional business.

Resort hotels proprietors similarly understood that this new segment of tourists was a viable market to target explicitly. The holiday golfer brought market development prospects, supplementing their traditional clientele while also providing the chance to cater to the accompanying non-golfing family members. Golf tourism also offered the hotel industry along the South Coast an opportunity to extend the regular holiday season beyond the traditional summer months into the shoulder season. The region's milder climate meant that spring and autumn golf was available and even winter golf was encouraged, as Sutherland had endorsed at Bournemouth.⁵ Hotels sponsored the prizes for local golfing competitions, not just to enhance their status within the community, but to actively back the local initiative and, crucially, to promote their establishments to the visiting golfers.

Moreover, the public sector saw that golf was an in-demand form of leisure amenity that attracted tourists and so the South Coast towns quickly engaged in competition to provide new courses and host golf events. This rivalry was important for local pride as well as economics, as corporations were very conscious of their reputation and ranking in perceived hierarchies of respectability. Golf was a sport that would help promote them and deliver future dividends. Increased visitor numbers brought investment into the towns, helping to achieve the corporations' remit of overseeing economic well-being of the district, thus justifying the sometimes contentious outlay and commitment to providing the golfing opportunities.

An influx of green-fee paying visitors was attractive to private golf clubs that were often financially challenged, being only able to draw on a 180-degree catchment area for their membership. This geographical handicap is an often overlooked disadvantage of their seaside location. By encouraging visitors, hosting tournaments or welcoming groups of society golfers, golf tourism generated a valuable additional source of revenue for clubs.

⁵ Golf Causerie, *The Daily News*, 11 March 1911

This financial reward more than outweighed the negative and occasional confrontational attitude of the local membership who viewed visiting golfers as an invasion of their clubs.

The final driver to emerge was how The Open Championships attracted significant, if contested, numbers of passive golf tourists to the courses in Kent that hosted these events. Getz identified the impact of major sports events and the urge to be there, in attracting spectators. With golf increasing in popularity as a sport, this compulsion was evidenced in Chapter Eight that reviewed how the crowds were drawn to watch The Open to cheer on their local favourites and international superstars alike.⁶

Once the enablers provided the tangible assets to partake in golf tourism, they then required a range of marketing and media motivators to develop and enhance the awareness of the opportunities. The level of marketing was intense as the competition to attract the golfing tourist was often fierce between the rival towns and clubs. A powerful and consistent tool of marketing was the use of imagery to stimulate the golfing tourist into visiting the resorts. The railway companies were in the frontline of this, using stylised pictures to portray different themes, but always showing the exciting destinations awaiting the city-dwelling tourist. The strategic use of golfing figures subliminally suggested that they should take the train to these, seemingly always sunny and attractive, golfing venues. This candid use of imagery also employed the depiction of women golfers to illustrate how they were also regarded as welcome golfing tourists. Through these representations, golf tourism became a more respectable and fashionable activity with increased levels of public awareness.

The importance of the written form of marketing has not been underplayed within this thesis. Hotels were keen to highlight, in the national, local and specialist golfing press, how they catered for golfers. Their tactics incorporated offering discounts and illustrating how they were conveniently located close to the town's golf courses. The media were also prominent in highlighting golf tourism, prompted by the clubs who submitted reports of their events and tournaments to the national press, with *The Times* notably prominent in publishing the results. For clubs like Seaford GC, this reflected the

⁶ Getz, *Event Studies*, 77

number of London-based club members who were weekend golfing warriors. Still, it also served to facilitate awareness of the opportunities available for seaside holiday golf to the broader readership. Similarly, the national coverage extended to marketing in periodicals such as *Golf* and *Golf Illustrated*. While they too carried news of competitions, they were complemented by features on the South Coast towns and golf clubs and highlighted in sections entitled ‘Golfing Trips’. Written to promote the clubs to the curious and eager urban golfer, the intention was to attract golfers to visit the links and to spend an extended vacation in the towns.

From the 1920s and all through the 1930s the growing consumption of radio shows was of mutual benefit as golf became a regular programme topic on the embryonic radio schedules. The reciprocity was returned as golf was subsequently promoted as a respectable and fashionable sport helping to influence the expansion in golf tourism. Broadcasts from the Open Championships whetted the appetite, and then programmes such as the BBC’s *Some Golf Hints for the Holidays* further encouraged urban golfers to venture to the South Coast links for a new challenge and an active holiday.⁷ A significant advantage that the South Coast enjoyed over its golfing holiday destination rivals, such as the Lancashire coast and Scotland, was its proximity to London, with its extensive suburbs and commuter-belt towns that were home to a large, affluent, and upper-middle-class golf-playing population. This provided a legion of potential golf tourists keen to explore the courses that were in easy access of the capital, often taking advantage of the favourable terms and times offered by the railway companies in association with the private golf clubs. Likewise, the throngs of passive golfing tourists who travelled from the capital to watch the Open Championships on the Kent coast benefited from the excellent transport links through the county.

Some clubs owed their existence to the altruistic benevolence of wealthy land-owners who contributed land to private clubs or civic authorities to enable the construction of new links. This was the case at Bexhill where the De La Warr family were keen for the town to prosper and donated land and money for many capital projects including the

⁷ *Through the Green*, March 2009

land for the Cooden Beach GC.⁸ Equally Bournemouth, courtesy of the Gervis-Meyrick and Eastbourne thanks to the Davis-Gilbert family similarly profited from this form of land acquisition. Alternatively, at Portsmouth, it was the Council who built a municipal course after recognising the tourism opportunities golf provided, to diversify the range of tourists holidaying in the city.⁹

Two more geographic advantages that the region enjoyed in the facilitation of golf tourism were its ports and its southern latitude. Portsmouth harbour was used by millions of holiday-makers who travelled annually to the Isle of Wight, many of whom were journeying to play golf on the Island's eight courses. Ports in Kent and Sussex served the near continent and thus the courses in northern France for the more adventurous golfing tourist. The latitude permitted kinder weather for the golfers which gave it an advantage over its competitors. This extended the season allowing golf to be played on courses in better conditions, less water-logged, less frequently frozen than those located inland or in the midland and northern parts of Britain. In the summer, during hotter months, the South Coast resorts benefitted from gentle sea breezes to cool down the golfers as they played under the summer sun. The climatic benefits were reflected in the railway posters advertising the resorts with the ubiquitous yellow sun and blue skies.

Golf Tourism did start to make the sport more accessible for those previously restricted segments of society, with cracks formed in the barriers, but short of universally or entirely breaking them down. Stubborn inequalities remained, as golf in the period of this study was still strongly male and class dominated with players from professional occupations occupying the majority of tee-times. Despite the evidenced impact of golf tourism and incremental social and cultural changes, access barriers were still widespread at certain elite clubs with the historic discriminative rules, customs and prejudices remaining in place. However, the majority of resort courses were more welcoming to women, as individuals, for competitions or occasionally as part of societies. They were more likely to be favourably accommodated with fewer, if any, restrictions related to the days and times they were permitted to play and particularly

⁸ Price, *The Unremitting Challenge*, 18

⁹ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 15 July 1926

when playing at the region's municipally-owned courses. Cooden Beach GC was one of the early adopters of ladies only competitions, mixed events and even men versus ladies matches, all open to guests and visitors. Whereas, many contemporary urban clubs did not entertain such progressive levels of participation for women, with access rights to the course frequently being fought over, preventing such parity as women enjoyed at Cooden Beach GC.¹⁰ Seaside golf was often in advance of national activism on equality, being quite bold for the times and, compared to the slow progress in general society, it was almost revolutionary. Certainly, large scale social activism did not commence until the 1960s, which led to changes of legislation in the 1970s. These laws included the 1975 Sex Decimation Act to legally improve the rights of women in the workplace, but some golf clubs still barred female members into the twenty-first century.

Cheaper transport links enabled the lower-middle classes and some skilled workers to be more able to take holidays. This, together with the culture of many seaside courses, particularly the municipal links, led to more liberal attitudes to who could play golf. No secretary's letter from one's home club or an introduction from a member to play as a guest was required. If you had money to pay the green fee, you were welcome to play on the links. The relaxation of the ban on Sunday play at Portsmouth municipal course was beneficial to those less well off as it gave them the chance to play when otherwise they could not afford to be members at private clubs. Visits by golf societies involved less stringent or individually focused entry requirements, so players who might otherwise have been barred were able to gain access while being part of a collective. Equally, the review of the 1930s Bournemouth Open revealed that it comprised of some working-class golf tourists who were able to enter and compete on an equal footing as the bank managers, doctors and army officers.

By filling a gap in golf tourism's historiography, this thesis provides several new insights building on the work of Huggins, Durie and Vamplew.¹¹ While it would be impossible and unrealistic to expect to quantify the full value or contribution of golf

¹⁰ George, 'Ladies First', 288-308.

¹¹ Durie and Huggins, 'Sport, social tone and the seaside resorts', 173-187; Huggins, 'Sport, tourism and history', 107-130; Vamplew, 'Concepts of Capital' 299-331.

tourism, this study has highlighted its benefits for many towns, communities and golf clubs on the South Coast. Amongst the remarkable features that emerged was the quantity of local collective partnerships that developed to facilitate golf tourism, the frequency and the distances travelled to partake in it and the high regard that the press had for the crowds that spectated the golf events held in Kent.

Golf tourism was used to entice new business and provided economic benefits for the public, commercial and voluntary sector providers of facilities. All three catered for the emerging sector of society wanting to play golf while on holiday or as the sole reason for their visit. A combination of factors contributed to this outcome: some were planned such as those towns that created the municipal courses and the organisation of annual Open competitions; some were more fortunate and associated with the demographics and geography of the region that proved equally beneficial to the South Coast resorts and the many suppliers of golf tourism. One of the most striking revelations is the collaboration of organisations to facilitate this outcome. In places, this is understandable, and evidence has shown that natural partnerships were formed for the combined and mutual benefit of all parties. Local businesses, hoteliers, bar and restaurant owners and transport companies all benefited from this influx of often moneyed visitors. For private members' golf clubs and their under-pressure treasurer, the green fees paid by golfing visitors was a bonus when locally generated revenue was harder to find and helped some clubs remain solvent. Lastly, in terms of economic benefits, there was the added dividend of gentrification for the neighbourhoods surrounding the golf links. Although only amounting to a small localised windfall in terms of the increases in rates collected, there was a more significant economic bonus in terms of new local facilities and shops built and a general uplift in the reputation for the neighbourhood, as a result of this meritorious circle of events.

For the golfing tourist to partake in this activity, a willingness to travel relatively long distances in a period when railways were the primary mode of transport was striking. Later when the motor-car, for the wealthier golfer, had become a more popular means of transportation to speed the urban living golf tourist from the city to the coast, distance was certainly no barrier. The challenge and excitement of playing golf while away from home be it just for the weekend, a more extended period of vacation, with or without the participation in one of the many Open competitions, was enough to motivate significant numbers of golfers to spend many hours in transit. Those towns that were the chosen

destination by the golfing tourist had frequently been engaged in keen inter-town competition with their neighbour to attract this patronage. This local rivalry was exemplified when the mayor of Weymouth wanted a municipal golf course to compete with Bournemouth or when Eastbourne was trying to gain a feeling of superiority over Brighton as the local paper stated that no public money had been spent on providing any of the town's three courses.¹² That Eastbourne did not have a municipal course is a crucial exposé that corrects previous assumptions that have been perpetuated in several earlier studies. Part of this local rivalry was grounded in how golf was seen as a sport that attracted the right kind of visitor. For towns and clubs, this was important when they were keen to grow or maintain their reputation as quality destinations. Often this pecking-order was judged by the class and grandeur of the resort's hotels and the local amenities present. This in turn rewarded the enablers with an economic dividend through the opportunity to charge higher prices and a return on their initial investments in facilities and advertising.

Golf tourism has been shown to advance golf's position as a sport for all, or at least more than just one for affluent local males or the upwardly-mobile, urban gentleman golfers. Moreover, the opportunities taken by some segments in society to play golf while on holiday would have accelerated the pressure on traditional clubs to modernise their out-of-date restrictive rules and social codes. For instance, parity for women's participation at these clubs had often been restricted, perpetuating the social norms in contemporary Britain. Whereas, the newly liberated women golfers returning to the inland clubs would have been encouraged to demand the same rights as they had enjoyed when playing golf on holiday. The association of social, well-being and health benefits from playing golf were attached to the participating in golf tourism in some of the literature. This was even being touted as a motivator for resettlement and de-urbanisation by suggesting players might consider relocating permanently to the South Coast after enjoying their holidays in the healthier environment on the South Coast.

¹² *Eastbourne Gazette*, 28 January 1908

One unanticipated discovery was the repeated instances of how golf tourism on the South Coast facilitated golfing opportunities and exhibited linkages to British colonial society. This manifested itself in several ways, with Littlehampton, St. Leonards and Seaford GCs all hosting golf societies with colonial affiliation. Two further examples of these colonial links were entrants to the 1930s Bournemouth Amateur Opens listing their home clubs as being in Singapore and Australia and finally entreaties from the LGU that Rowlands Castle GC offered temporary membership to ladies who were members of Colonial Affiliated Clubs. These cases of colonial visitors returning to the metropole reflect the global reputation that the region held. A further unexpected revelation was the defensive national and regional pride or snobbery that was associated with hosting The Open Championship, particularly before World War One. While golf is recognised as the Scottish game, the extent to which the Scottish press jealously viewed this and made derogatory and disparaging remarks about the crowds' numbers supporting the early Opens played in Kent was noteworthy. The contrast with the London press' reporting was substantial and revealed very different interpretations of the numbers watching. In an age before official crowd figures were recorded, the truth cannot be established, but the shades of xenophobia are very evident. In contrast, the conduct of the Kent crowd was universally deemed, by the press, to be superior to those attending the English-based Opens in the north-west. Did this reflect the culture of the society in the south-east who ventured to the tournaments compared with the more boisterous spectators drawn from a more industrial city-dwelling Lancastrian crowd?

The pursuit of the unknowable potentially hampered this study from providing a more in-depth insight into the demographic and economic impact of golf tourism along the South Coast. Further studies regarding participation by women are needed; a comparative study with the men who played in the 1936-39 Bournemouth Opens or other similar competitions to make direct comparisons is required. This would identify if the women participants were independent or related to male participants at the same events. If the women were independent, it will provide a unique insight into the socio-economic status of lady amateur golfers in the 1930s. Further investigations would also determine if these women's geographical spread was similar to the men's or if they were from more local locations as might be anticipated in the 1930s.

In my investigation, the aim was to undertake a regional case study to discover trends and patterns across the South Coast, but further research could explore individual towns

such as Bournemouth or Eastbourne as prime locations for golf tourism. Thus further micro investigations could be undertaken, particularly if it was possible to access reports on finances for hotels, business or golf clubs, specifically those that identify the receipts generated from golf tourism. Then a greater focus on local economic impact studies could be possible for individual South Coast towns rather than my broader regional research aims. Finally, it would be fascinating to conduct an investigation into the psychological addiction of golf tourism, historical or contemporary, to investigate the premise that it provides a unique opportunity to deliver four dimensions of novelty: thrill, change from routine, boredom-alleviation and surprise.

The empirical findings in this study have shown that golf tourism was a significant and vital category of tourism as a generator of business and economic wealth for the South Coast. This study also contributes to a new understanding of the advances in social wealth which golf tourism delivered, through pushing-back some of the game's barriers, increasing accessibility and the diversity of participants through challenging the established norms, rules and codes.

John Sutherland's perception succinctly encapsulates the attraction and addiction to Golf Tourism:

Golfers on holiday are wholly absorbed by the game and its associations; they play golf all day long, do nothing else, and want nothing better. They revel in meeting and beating men of their own calibre, and delight in an ever-widening circle of golfing acquaintances. The month or six-weeks spent on the links, with their elixir breezes from beryl bays and marram banks, is to them a panacea for every ill. They may return home to their homes more or less golfing wrecks from excessive indulgence in the pastime, but, fortunately, this they seldom realise.¹³

¹³ Golf Causerie, *The Daily News*, 1 July 1911

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