



## THE DOWIE

*A GREAT SHORT HOLE: Although the Dowie (7th) hole at Hoylake is not one of the oldest, it is probably one of the best known on the course. Named after the founder of the club, J. Muir Dowie, the first captain, it has always presented difficulties even to the champions. A low shot with draw is the ideal method of approach. The grass hollow beyond the green out of which the shot is being played is known as "the coffin"*

# ROYAL LIVERPOOL GOLF CLUB

By GUY B. FARRAR

**H**OYLAKES! What a wealth of past golfing pictures are conjured up by that single word! Pictures of the greatest of amateurs, John Ball (Junior as he was then), followed by a fervent crowd of supporters whose enthusiasm was only kept in check by the aid of stout ropes; pictures of Harold Hilton winning the first Open Championship ever played there; of Sandy Herd's performance with that hated new invention, the rubber-cored ball; of Massy wreathed in smiles after his triumph for "La Belle France"; and of John Henry Taylor grimly fighting his way to victory in the teeth of a Hoylake gale.

Then a hiatus—the war period—and afterwards, more pictures, this time of foreign invaders; of Walter Hagen's eleventh-hour recovery when inspiration only came to him at the last five holes, and, finally, a picture of a surging crowd—the biggest ever seen at Hoylake—setting out from the first tee to watch that golfing genius from the New World, the all-conquering Bobbie Jones.

Next week, the old links will again see all the hurly-burly of an Open Championship week, peculiar interest attaching to this year's event owing to the lengthening of the Hoylake course to over 7000 yards, an extension which has aroused acute controversy in the golfing Press.

**W**HY these new tees, only to be used in championships, should occasion so bitter an outburst on the part of certain golf writers who have not seen them is difficult to understand.

To keep pace with the improvements in balls and clubs, improvements which give more and more power to modern golfers, courses must be for ever extending, unless the former balance between drive and second shot is to be completely altered.

Like every other course, Hoylake has suffered from this elastic shrinkage, many of its two-shot holes—the second, sixth, and eighteenth, for example—having degenerated into drives followed by the shortest of pitches.

**G**ONE are the days when only a prodigious second finished on the third green. Mitchell was one of the few who performed this feat in 1910. Even in 1924, Hagen

played full second shots at the fourteenth and fifteenth holes; now the same greens can be approached with a contemptuous flick with an iron, and yet people talk of the new teeing-grounds as alterations.

Unseen alterations have indeed been taking place during the last twenty years, and the new tees are an effort, however inadequate, at restoring the old conditions of length when a champion needed his full bag of clubs, and something more than mashie approaches were required to obtain a succession of 4's.

Because this change has been wrought in the ball-makers' factories and the club-makers' shops without involving visible alterations to the links, its presence is overlooked or even denied by players and critics alike, but it is an unpleasant and established fact for all that.

**D**OES anyone seriously suggest that the first hole at Hoylake, perhaps the most famous nineteenth hole in the world, is as difficult to-day as it was thirty years ago?

At the last Amateur Championship in 1933, Cyril Tolley played an iron club each time from this tee, afterwards flicking his

second shot to the green with almost profane ease—the dreaded second which often needed wood in days gone by; and yet we are solemnly warned that an extension of fifteen yards has made this hole too long and the course has become far too severe a test for even the world's best golfers.

**W**HAT do these much criticised extensions amount to? A new tee, 15 yards behind the present teeing-ground, at the first hole, an alteration which, unfortunately, cannot lengthen the second shot. An extension of 50 yards at the second hole, which now measures 419 yards. This will prevent drives reaching the cross-bunker in front of the green, but by no stretch of imagination can it transform the Road Hole into a difficult 4.

**T**HE Briars (sixth) hole has been endowed with a new elongated teeing-ground on which the boxes may be placed from 20 to 40 yards behind their present position, according to the prevailing conditions. At its full length, the hole will measure 438 yards, giving a carry of just over 200 yards across the out-of-bounds corner. This was considered outrageous until Cyril Tolley, playing from the back tee, secured a 4 with the aid of a spoon and a No. 5 iron!

The Far Hole (eighth) has added 45 yards to its length; here, a long second may be required to reach the plateau green—the bunker on the right has now been converted into a grass hollow—the total length to be covered by the two shots being 527 yards. A new back tee at the tenth makes this hole 455 yards, the carry over the three pot bunkers being 200 yards, a distance well within the compass of champion golfers. The only other extension comes at the Royal (seventeenth) hole, where 25 yards has been added to the tee-shot which is now played nearer to the eighteenth fairway.



*CHAMPIONS OF OLD: An old photograph showing Hoylake in 1890 (the Royal Hotel was then the Club-house), with John Ball (right) and J. E. Laidlay standing on the first tee before driving off in the final of the Amateur Championship. The Hoylake player won the match by 5 and 4 and later in the year won the Open Championship; a record only equalled 40 years afterwards by Bobbie Jones in 1930*

1. 435 Course	10. 455 Dee
2. 419 Road	11. 193 Alps
3. 480 Long	12. 464 Hilbre
4. 158 Cop	13. 179 Rushes
5. 424 Telegraph	14. 511 Field
6. 438 Briars	15. 443 Lake
7. 200 Dowie	16. 532 Dun
8. 527 Far	17. 419 Royal
9. 393 Punch Bowl	18. 408 Stand
3474	3604 = 7078