GREAT GOLFERS
Their Methods at a Glance

BY GEORGE W. BELDAM

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY
HAROLD H. HILTON
J. H. TAYLOR  JAMES BRAID  ALEX. HERD
HARRY VARDON

ILLUSTRATED
BY 268 ACTION-PHOTOGRAPHS

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top of the swing. In the cases of Vardon and Braid, the pressure on the left thumb is gradually eased to the top of the swing, but is resumed about the moment the wrists come into the stroke—just before impact. Something of this kind no doubt takes place in Mr. Hilton's case. Mr. John Ball, junr., and A. Herd grip in very similar fashion, and though it would appear that there is decidedly more palm grip, yet one cannot say that wrist work is by any means absent.

There is undoubtedly a good deal of right hand in their grips, but close observation will show they are also holding very tightly with the left. Herd seems to use his wrists, especially the right one, just at the time of impact. It is my impression that he allows his right hand to come into nearly every stroke, at just about that moment, pushing the club through with the right hand.

There is no doubt that Mr. Ball's right-hand grip is most useful to him in his famous push stroke with the cleek, which has helped to earn for him the reputation of having no superior in his play up to the hole.

In those photographs which show the players who use the overlapping grip, addressing the ball—the position of the left wrist, or the back of the left hand, is worthy of notice. The lens of the camera was looking up and down the line on which the ball is placed, at right angles to the line of flight.

The camera shows that Braid turns his left hand to a greater extent than either Vardon or Taylor. The point of view of the camera in each case being the same, the relative positions of their hands are shown. It will be noticed, by comparing the grips of Braid,
Vardon, and Taylor (see their respective series plate Nos. III, III, and II) that this fact is borne out by the positions of the left thumb on the shaft. In Braid's photos his left thumb is more against the side of the shaft, and Vardon's is partly on the side, whereas Taylor's is on the top. It may be that by turning the left hand more, as in the case of Braid and Vardon, the hands fit into each other better, and are in a position which helps the turn of the wrists at the top of the swing. Whether this is worthy of notice, each reader who cares to experiment can see for himself. See Vardon, Taylor, and Braid, Plate Nos. I, II, and III. Notice the angle the right thumb makes with the shaft. It will be seen the V is rather across the shaft. Mr. Maxwell's right thumb is, however, rather against the shaft than over it. See Plate Nos. I, V, VIII. Vardon also does this for the push stroke.

**The Stance**

All the greatest golfers of the present day seem to have adopted the open stance, viz., the right foot is in advance of the left. Here the use of squares, or the "gridiron" as it has been called, is very apparent. Nothing is easier than to exaggerate this open stance, or to form a false conception of it. In actual practice, the right foot has a tendency to creep too much in advance of the left; the photographs show 9 inches (or a square and a half) to be the limit. The position of the ball relative to the left heel seems to vary but little in those adopting the open stance. There is, indeed, a great similarity in those stances—one cannot help noticing
JAMES BRAID
BY HIMSELF

OPEN CHAMPION, 1901.

Born: Earlsferry, Fife, February, 1870.
Weight, 12 stone 6 lbs. Height, 6 feet 1½ inches.

14/12/03.

DEAR SIR,

Herewith I enclose Photographs, also a few notes on the different strokes. I hope what I have written will be sufficient to help some Golfers on their way.

Yours faithfully,

Jas. Braid

W. Beldam, Esq.
**GRIP**

*The left hand.*—The left hand is well over the top of the shaft.

The thumb is against the side of the shaft, not on top.

My grip is very tight with all fingers.

*The right hand.*—The club lies in the joint of the first finger of this hand.

The two first fingers grip the club.

The little finger rides on the top of the first finger of the left hand.

The thumb lies rather over the centre of the shaft.

The left thumb is pressed against the side of the shaft by the right hand (*see* Plate No. II).

The whole grip must not be so tight as to stiffen the muscles of the forearms.

The reason for the overlapping of the little finger is to make the grip as one-handed as possible, and it insures both wrists working better together.

Plate No. III shows the right hand slightly opened, so that the position of the left thumb and hand can be easily seen.

Plate No. II shows the part of the right hand which presses on the left thumb.

Plate No. I shows the grip at the top of the swing.
Plate No. II
James Braid

Grip
GRIP
RIGHT HAND OPEN
SHOWING POSITION
OF LEFT THUMB
First Edition, March 1904
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DEDICATED

BY KIND PERMISSION

TO

THE RIGHT HON. A. J. BALFOUR

PRIME MINISTER

WHO HAS DONE SO MUCH FOR

THE ROYAL AND ANCIENT GAME