

New Mandarins of Golf

George Duncan and Abe Mitchell, British Stars, Will Contest Our Main Title at Columbia

By GRANTLAND RICE

THOSE in charge of our Open Golf championship cup will kindly put another guard around the pantry. We seem to see trouble ahead and the reason isn't extremely hard to locate. We might just as well go back a few laps over past history to show why an extra guard is justified.

Back in 1900 one Harry Vardon and one John Henry Taylor came over from England to this country. They entered our open championship. The result was a bit jarring, for Vardon finished first and Taylor finished second. Thirteen years later, which should bring us to 1913, the same Vardon came over with Edward Rivers Ray, sometimes known as Ted. That year they tied for first place with Francis Ouimet, but the young Bostonian finally repulsed them in the play-off, with considerable slaughter. The best they could do was for Vardon to finish second, with Ray third.

Last summer Vardon and Ray, with the cup fever again upon them, came to Inverness. When the dust had blown away and the uproar of battle ceased, Ray was found to have finished first, with Vardon in a tie for second place. So it happened that once again our Open Golf cup crossed the ocean.

Now our golfing cousins from the land of the Thistle and the Rose are sending another pair, who might well be christened the New Mandarins of Golf. One is George Duncan of Scotland. The other is Abe Mitchell of England. And in addition to giving battle in our Open Championship at Columbia, Washington, D. C., they will display their wares in exhibition matches before 250,000 of our golfing citizens in another one of those extended tours that bring in a lot of kale and almost as many blisters.

Great Gallery Pair

DUNCAN and Mitchell will be a wonderful pair for the big galleries of American golf to follow and watch. They will see in Duncan the fastest living golfer and in Mitchell the longest hitter of them all. And the gallery in golf, as the crowd in baseball, esteems a resounding wallop above almost every other feature which could be offered.

Duncan, who won the British Open last June at Deal, is a bundle of nerves who might almost as well be moving on a motor cycle. Being nervous, Duncan steps up and hits the ball before he has time to think about it. In this way he double crosses his nervous system, for the ball is off and under way with the swing completed before he can get "jumpy" or upset. In this respect Duncan uses rare judgment, far better judgment than the average duffer who measures his delay by his nervousness. The more nervous he is, the more he fidgets and waggles and waits. He knows he is going to take a swing at the ball, but, gosh, how he dreads it.

Duncan knows he can't afford to waste an extra second and give his highly charged nerves a chance. So you will frequently see him play his second shot almost before he stops, and when it comes to the greens, you will suddenly see the ball leave his putter before you knew he was close enough to hit it.

Nervous golfers, who abound in this well



GEORGE DUNCAN

WESTERN NEWSPAPER UNION

Who won the British Open Championship last year. Duncan is an excellent man to watch for those whose nerves obstruct their game



ABE MITCHELL

CENTRAL NEWS PHOTO

Arrives from Great Britain with Duncan to play in the Open Golf Championship. The cup was won last year by Vardon and Ray

bunkered commonwealth, will be able to get more than one valuable lesson from the Scotch star, who has proved conclusively that it isn't necessary to hover for an hour over a golf ball before landing on it with wood or iron. It won't be compulsory for you to be quite so fast as you will find Duncan. But he will give you the general idea of speeding things up, which you can at least copy to a moderate degree. The world was built in less time than many golfers waste in a month. Duncan has shown that one can get his par without taking an entire day to find it.

Many experts had figured that the great Scotch star was too high strung and jumpy ever to win a championship over a 72-hole test. When Duncan started with two bad rounds at Deal last June, the Scots shook their heads and gave up hope again. But Duncan immediately rallied and finished with two of the most brilliant rounds of the tourney, working his way into first place. He had proved that a nervous man can still go far, by handling his nerves in the right way. After defending his championship crown at St. Andrews, he will sail for the United States with Mitchell, and get ready for a running dive at our title, which Ted Ray corralled last August.

Abe Mitchell's Hitting

ABE MITCHELL'S arrival with Duncan will help to settle another argument that has lately stirred golfing circles. This argument concerns the long driving ability of Mitchell and Ray. Vardon insisted last fall that Ray could outhit them all, but Mitchell has a legion of supporters who have pinned the chaplet upon his forehead. The English star, to begin with, is a great believer in a comfortable stance where the feet are held only a medium distance apart. He doesn't care for the wide-spreading stance which so many follow, his own being not even so wide as that Hagen uses. Mitchell's feet are not jammed together, but they are closer than with most of the leading players. He believes this gives him more body leverage and adds several yards to his power.

Neither does he pay the slightest attention to a follow through. You rarely see him at the finish with the club over his left shoulder in the orthodox completion of the swing. It may even be only half way around. He has medium hands with powerful wrists and an enormous amount of leverage. The whip-cracking snap of his blows is far beyond that of any other golfer now playing, as, without any body sway or any big lunge, he has on several occasions carried from 310 to 315 yards. If he happens to connect, as he generally does, there is hardly a hole in golf that he can't reach in two full shots. This gives him a big advantage, even above the average long hitter. Once in a while when Ted Ray connects he is as long as Mitchell or any player that ever lived. But Ray frequently imparts a slight cut to the stroke which kills many yards, whereas Mitchell's drive starts out on a straight line, rising steadily to gain a maximum flight. It is a wonderful ball to watch, with its rising battle against air resistance and its unwavering straightness down the course.