

Valuable Book Group, LLC
Specialists in Rare and Antiquarian Golf Books
Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector

Our Favorite Golf Books

Through 2006 over 15,500 golf books have been published, and it can be daunting to find the best ones. It has been five years since we last published a list of our favorite golf books, so here is an updated listed, which has now expanded to three pages and boils it down to less than 50.

How does one pick their favorite golf course, or their favorite city or favorite restaurant? Well, it's not easy to pick your favorite golf books, either. One way to pick your favorite is to create multiple categories, like we've done, and make a couple picks in each. The books listed below would all make great gifts for the serious golf fan and cover a variety of price ranges.

Club Histories

1. *The Valley Club of Montecito 1928-1998*
2. *Garden City Golf Club: A History 1999*
3. *Sunningdale Golf Club 1900-2000*
4. *Pine Valley Golf Club: A Chronicle*. Shelly Warner, 1982.
5. *The Definitive Guide to The Hotchkiss Course - Woodhall Spa*. Latham. 2004
6. *Golf at Merion*. 2005
7. *Prestwick Golf Club A History and Some Records*. Shaw. 1932
8. *The Evolution of the Links at The Royal County Down Golf Club*. Latham. 2006
9. *The Story of Golf at The Country Club*. De St. Jorre. 2009
10. *Somerset Hills Country Club 1899-1999*
11. *Royal & Ancient Golf Club St. Andrews*. Three volume set by John Behrend
12. *The Story of Seminole*. Dodson. 2007

Our favorite club histories all share two things in common. First, they are about world-class golf courses. And second, they all have the power to transport you to the course and really give a feel for what it is like to play there. There is nothing worse to us than a club history that just goes through the minutes of board meetings and tells esoteric facts about the course. All these books deliver on both fronts.

Great Writing

1. *Following Through* by Herbert Warren Wind. 1985
2. *Down the Fairway* by Bobby Jones. 1927
3. *The Best of Henry Longhurst*. 1978
4. *The Story of American Golf* by Herbert Warren Wind. 1948
5. *Golf Dreams* by John Updike. 1996

6. *Golf on the LMS* by Dell Leigh. 1925
7. *The Making of the Masters*. David Owen. 1999.

These six authors won't let you down. Wind is the most precise and gripping, Longhurst the wittiest, Updike the most insightful. Jones to this day has some of the best observations about the game and Leigh takes you back to a different era; you can feel what golf was like in an earlier period. Owen's book is the single best written about the Masters.

Picture Books/Coffee Table

1. *Legendary Golf Clubs of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland*. Edgeworth and de St. Jorre. 1999
2. *Legendary Golf Clubs of the American East*. Edgeworth and de St. Jorre. 2003
3. *Where Golf is Great*. James Finegan. 2006
4. *Planet Golf*. Darius Oliver. 2007
5. *Creating Classics: The Golf Courses of H.S. Colt*. Peter Pugh. 2009
6. *The Scrapbook of Old Tom Morris*. Joy. 2001

Maybe we're simple minded, but we refer to these books more than any other in the library. *The Legendary Golf Clubs* books quite literally transport you to these elite and private courses. We've raved about these for years and our enthusiasm is still going strong!

Reference Books

1. *The Game of Golf and the Printed Word*. 2006. Donovan & Jerris. For the serious collector of golf books, lists every golf book published through 2005.
2. *The Book of Golfers* by Daniel Wexler. 2005. Comprehensive coverage of golf's historical figures, a small but very detailed bio on each is included.

Fiction

1. *The Greatest Course That Never Was* by J. Michael Veron. 2001
2. *The Greatest Player Who Never Lived* by J. Michael Veron. 2000

Veron is not a well-known writer, but none-the-less we find his golf fiction quite good.

Improving Your Game

1. *Golf is Not a Game of Perfect* by Dr. Joseph Rotella
2. *Zen Golf* by Joseph Parent

Both are concise, simple and actually help both in life and golf (is there a difference?)

Best Produced

1. *Golf: The Badminton Library*. Large Paper Limited Edition of 250. Horace Hutchinson. 1890.
2. *British Golf Links*. Large Paper Limited Edition of 250. Horace Hutchinson. 1897.

3. *A Royal and Ancient Game* Large Paper Edition of 50. Robert Clark. 1875.
4. *A Golfer's Gallery by Old Masters*. Darwin. 1920

The first time I saw the large paper editions of these books my jaw dropped. Wow! Although all four were published in the nineteenth or early twentieth century, the quality of the bindings, paper, print and illustrations to this day still set the standard. You may need a home equity loan for these four but they are cornerstone collectibles.

Architecture

1. *The Life and Work of Dr. Alister MacKenzie*. Doak, Scott and Haddock. 2001.
2. *The Links*. Robert Hunter. 1926
3. *Golf Architecture in America*. George Thomas. 1927
4. *Golf Architecture*. Alister MacKenzie. 1920
5. *The Evangelist of Golf*. George Bahto. 2002
6. *The 500 World's Greatest Golf Holes*. George Peper. 2003

Who doesn't like to compare their opinion of a course to Doak's ratings and strong opinions? Since the National Golf Links of America never published a history, Bahto's is the next best thing and offers great insights into C.B. Macdonald.

Biography

1. *Scotland's Gift*. C.B. Macdonald. 1928
2. *The Walter Hagen Story*. Walter Hagen. 1956
3. *Down the Fairway*. Bobby Jones. 1927

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