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Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector

A review of golf books published by and about The Royal Liverpool Golf

The Open Championship returns to The Royal Liverpool Golf Club this July for the first time since 1967. The links at Royal Liverpool, known as Hoylake are very historic. Located in Lancashire England, Hoylake is the second oldest golf course in England. It was at Hoylake in 1930 that Bobby Jones won the Open Championship on his way to capturing the “impregnable quadrilateral” as it was called at the time, known today as the “Grand Slam.” Harold Hilton captured the first Open Championship played at Hoylake in 1897. Hoylake has the distinction of hosting the Open Championship the only time a Frenchman was the winner, in 1907, won by Arnaud Massy. (Of course if Jean Van De Velde had not hit driver off the 18th tee at Carnoustie there would probably be two French winners, but that’s another story). Hoylake has played host to the Open a total of ten times.

As befits such a great course, there have been many books written about it. The earliest is *Royal Liverpool Golf Club* by Guy B. Farrar published in 1932 by Willmer Brothers and & Co. Ltd. The book is 310 pages and contains three single page plans and one fold out map of the course. This book is one of the more scarce and expensive golf club histories that is collected. The green cloth front cover contains gilt lettering and the club’s motto which exudes a typically English confidence: “Far and Sure.” The book has an introduction written by Bernard Darwin and traces the founding and evolution of the course, recounts the many great championships contested there and is well written and interesting.



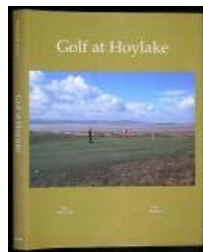
The Royal Liverpool Golf Club 1869-1969 was published by the club in 1969 and was written by Leslie Edwards. The full title includes *A Short history of the Club and of championships played over the Hoylake Links*. In Scotland, they would call this a wee book. It is only twenty four pages and measures less than 5 inches by 8 inches. The book is hardcover, done in green cloth with gilt lettering and the club logo.

In 1983 the club also published a revised and longer version of this same book, updated by both Leslie Edwards and John Brocklehurst. This edition was issued to celebrate the 1983 Walker Cup which was held at Hoylake and thus is known as the Walker Cup edition.

Expanded to 40 pages and in a slightly larger format, this book has a royal blue cover with gilt lettering and the club logo. Both books are interesting, but obviously brief.

In 1989 John Behrend authored *John Ball of Hoylake, Champion Golfer* in a signed limited edition of one hundred. This version of the book is done in leather and signed by the author and W.C. Campbell and also contains a special page, which is an extract from the minutes of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club from January 31, 1891, and is signed by Tim Marshall, Captain of Royal Liverpool. This edition was issued with a slipcase. It was also published in a limited edition of 1,800. This book was published in a brown cloth with gilt lettering and a laminated brown color jacket. Both were published by Grant Books. John Ball was one of the more accomplished English amateur golfers to ever play the game and is closely associated with Hoylake. He won the Amateur Championship eight times and the Open Championship once. A golfing authority of no less stature than Bernard Darwin says that Ball had the most beautiful swing of all time.

John Behrend & John Graham edited *Golf at Hoylake: A Royal Liverpool Golf Club Anthology* published in a total limited edition of 1,125 signed by the authors. It was published with a dust jacket by Grant Books in 1990 as seen below:



The book was also published in a more limited edition of 125 hand numbered copies with a green cloth slipcase. This version of the book was done in full gilt-lettered green morocco, gilt-stamped emblem on the front cover, gilt-lettered black morocco spine label, raised bands, marbled endpapers, all edges gilt. Finally, there was an edition of twelve *Special Contributors* copies bound in full leather and signed by the author, the captain of Royal Liverpool and the illustrator.

In 2001 Grant Books also published *Hoylake & the 1894 Amateur Championship* edited by David Hamilton and Blythe T. Bell. This was published in a leather bound limited edition of 500 copies, the first 100 of which were for subscribers. The book is illustrated with photos and contains a facsimile draw sheet for the 1894 Open Championship in a pocket in the back. The book is bound in green arbelave buckram. The subscribers edition is bound in half green chieftain morocco and signed by the editors and the Captain of Royal Liverpool and contains an extra illustration and list of subscribers.

The Tempest of 1894 and Its Sequel: The Story of the Royal Liverpool Village Play, published in 1995 describes village play. This is the day that non-member residents of Hoylake get to play the famous links. This is a softcover 25 page pamphlet. *Hoylake Race Track and the Beginnings of the Royal Liverpool Golf Course* is a 44 page softcover written by John Pinfold in a limited edition of 750.