



**VENUE OF THE 1928 BRITISH OPEN**  
The St. George's golf links at Sandwich, looking from the left side of the fairway to the fifth green

## Britain's Next Championships

By OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT

Britain's three major championships—the Open, the Ladies' and the Amateur—are to be decided next month, an arrangement that makes it possible for our friends the Americans to compete, and to get back, with lots of time to spare, in order to prepare for their own national events. This being the case, we in Britain are looking forward to welcoming big contingents from the United States in all three championships, believing that international rivalry in golf is the very lifeblood of the game. We do not begrudge America winning the British championship six times in the last seven years; on the contrary, we are rather grateful, because a rival's success makes us strive all the harder to raise the standard of our own play.

Besides, there is something deliciously sweet in regaining lost honours, a sensation that we hope to experience at St. George's, Sandwich, where the Open, the first of the three championships, is to be played. The hope is based on the fact that Mitchell, Britain's greatest golfer, is again fit and well, and eager for the fray. It is to Mitchell, more than any other man, that we look to win back the championship for Britain. True, in previous years he has been grievously disappointing, but ill-luck cannot last forever, and I make bold to prophesy that whoever beats Mitchell at Sandwich will win the championship. Sandwich is a course demanding absolute accuracy of shot—a little different from St. Andrews, where one can pull almost every drive and come to no harm—and for this and other reasons I am convinced that Mitchell will give the United States representatives a desperate run for their money.

In some quarters, Duncan is regarded as the more likely of the two to perform the trick, a belief based on the fact that the Scotsman, being far more imaginative and more artistic in his methods both in shot production and in dealing with constantly arising problems, will the more readily welcome the subtleties of the Sandwich links. A highly developed imagination, however, is often a fatal bar to success at golf, though, of course, there are always exceptions to every rule of life. Still, Duncan should do well at Sandwich. None who saw it will ever forget Duncan's wonderful last round of 69 in the championship six years ago, when he came within a stroke of overhauling Hagen.

On the shoulders of Mitchell and Duncan, therefore, rests the burden of the British attack. In the second line, there are Compston, the British professional champion of the year;

the brothers Whitcombe; Havers, who seems to have undergone a kind of rejuvenation after four years of tribulation; and a host of capable youngsters, some of whom have already got their feet firmly established on the ladder of fame. The four most notable players in this class are Henry Cotton, an ex-public schoolboy, who has thrown up a career in civil engineering to launch into the whirlpool of professional golf; Robert Ballantine a young Scotsman from the West Coast, who possesses all the characteristics in style and swing of the famous northern golfers of the past; Jack Smith, who has earned a reputation as being one of the longest drivers in the world; and Herbert Hodson, a young man from Wales, the present champion of the Principality.

It is significant of the new spirit in British golf that these youngsters have been issuing challenges among themselves accompanied by stakes of \$500. Cotton started the ball rolling by issuing a general challenge, which was immediately taken up by Smith, who, to the surprise of everybody, was soundly beaten in a 72-holes match over Sunningdale and St. George's Hill, by 6 and 5. This led to Ballantine challenging Cotton, and once again the result was a surprise, for on this occasion Cotton was completely outplayed by the Scotsman. In the first half of the match at Wentworth, Ballantine, playing beautifully and with splendid judgment, established the commanding lead of 8 up. When the second half came to be played at Hollinwell, in the Midlands, Ballantine simply hung on to his lead, and eventually won by 7 and 5.

The downfall of Cotton, one of the most earnest and studious golfers of the new age, was due to one very simple cause. Urged by well-meaning, but misguided friends, to get more length, Cotton decided to employ a heavier driver. The result was distressing in the extreme, for not only did the youth lose length, but he lost all sense of control and direction. In the furnace of experience, Cotton has learned, fortunately before it is too late, that in procuring length speed of club head is the only thing that really matters, and that mere weight of implement, unless manipulated by a very powerful man, tends to diminish rather than to increase speed. Everything points to the commencement of a new era in British golf, one that will render the task of the Americans in retaining the championship infinitely sterner than has been the case in recent years.