



# Golf in America (Sport and Society)

*George B. Kirsch*

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In this concise social history of golf in the United States from the 1880s to the present, George B. Kirsch tracks the surprising growth of golf as a popular, mainstream sport, in contrast to the stereotype of golf as a pastime enjoyed only by the rich elite. In addition to classic heroes such as Francis Ouiment, Gene Sarazen, Sam Snead, and Ben Hogan, the annals of golf's early history also include African American players--John Shippen Jr., Ted Rhodes, and Charlie Sifford--as well as both white and black female players such as Mildred "Babe" Didrikson Zaharias, Louise Suggs, Betsy Rawls, Ann Gregory, and former tennis champ Althea Gibson. *Golf in America* tells the stories of these and many other players from different social classes, ethnic backgrounds, races, and genders.

Examining golf's recent history, *Golf in America* looks at the impact of television and the rivalry between Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus, both of whom in 1996 were impressed by an upstart named Eldrick "Tiger" Woods. Kirsch also highlights the history of public golf courses in the United States, from Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx to Boston's Franklin Park, Chicago's Jackson Park, and other municipal and semiprivate courses that have gone relatively unnoticed in the sport's history. Illustrated with nearly two dozen photographs, this book shows that golf in America has always reflected a democratic spirit, evolving into a sport that now rivals baseball for the honor of being acclaimed "America's national pastime."

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