

Royal Mail News

Golf

Five stamps featuring Scottish golf courses go on sale at post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and Philatelic Counters on 5 July 1994.

The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers promulgated golf's first set of rules, The Thirteen Articles, 250 years ago in 1744. Having moved from Leith Links to Musselburgh, they settled in 1891 at Muirfield in East Lothian where The Open Championship was first held there in 1892. It remains one of the world-famed Scottish links on the Open Championship rota. The Open has also been played at the Old Course, St Andrews, Carnoustie, Royal Troon, and the Ailsa, Turnberry, which is the venue for 1994.



The 19p stamp depicts the Old Course at St Andrews. The origins of golf over the Old Course are lost in the mists of antiquity. Archbishop John Hamilton in 1552 reserved for the townspeople the right to use the links for "golfe, futeball, shutting and all games". The course, which owes far more to nature than to man, is a narrow strip of classic links land shaped like a shepherd's crook. In 1764, the Royal and Ancient suggested that the first four holes, played both going out and coming home, be reduced to two holes. This cut a round at St Andrews from 22 holes to 18 which now constitutes a round of golf. Many of the features of the course, including the bunkers, have

acquired names of their own – "Hell", "Coffins" and "Grave".

The 25p denomination shows the 18th Hole at Muirfield, described by Jack Nicklaus, as "probably the best hole on the best Open Championship course in Britain". In 1966, when Nicklaus won the Open he joined Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan and Gary Player as the only golfers to have captured all four of the modern majors. The billowing rough was so deep that



Doug Sanders, commented "Give me the lost ball and hay concession and you can keep the prize money! The winners of the Open at Muirfield have been:- 1892 Harold Hinton, 1896 Harry Vardon, 1901 and 1906 James Braid, 1912 Ted Ray, 1929 Walter Hagen, 1935 Alf Perry, 1948 Henry Cotton, 1959 Gary Player, 1966 Jack Nicklaus, 1972 Lee Trevino, 1980 Tom Watson, 1987 and 1992 Nick Faldo.

The Fifteenth at Carnoustie: is shown on the 30p value. This seemingly innocuous hole is where many have come to grief. Many a golfing missionary left the little grey town for the New World, including Stewart Maiden whose graceful Carnoustie swing was so faithfully





ROYAL MAIL MINT STAMPS



The unique character of the course, which owes far more to nature than the artificial alterations of a shepherd's crook. In 1764, a suggestion from the Royal and Ancient Golf Club that two holes cut a round at St Andrew's were played both going out and coming home, be reduced to two holes at a round of the topographical features of the course, including the bunkers, have acquired names of their own. 'Hell', 'Coffins' and 'Grave' carry their own connotations while sundry blameless citizens, buried in the graveyard over which the eighteenth green was built, are doomed to lie for eternity beneath the 'Valley of Sin'.



The Eighteenth at Muirfield: Par Four 448 Yards 'Probably', said Jack Nicklaus, the best hole on the best Open Championship course in Britain'. In 1966, when Jack Nicklaus won the Open to join Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan and Gary Player as the only golfers to have captured all four of the modern majors, the biting rough was so deep as to have induced from Doug Sanders, who was destined to finish joint second, one of the most memorable quips in all golf's storied lore: 'Give me the lost ball and buy me a concession and you can keep the prize money!' Nicklaus named a course after Muirfield: the 1950 Open champion, Gary Player, his home; and James Brand, who, like Nick Faldo, won two of his Opens at the home of the Honourable Golfers, his son. No doubt in later life, the boy was suitably grateful that the Open that year had not been played at, say, Gog Magog.

Above right: Old and Young Tom Morris both four times winners of the Open Championship. Left: In the hand of St Andrew's, 1872.

The Fifteenth at Carnoustie: Par Four 456 Yards. A seemingly innocuous hole where many have come to grief, often through dwelling on what has gone before or lies ahead. The famed finish, made by the serpent's coil of the Barry Burn, can prey on players' minds long before they get to it. It can, too, be difficult for golfers to put behind them what befell them at such great holes as the long sixth, where down the left is out of bounds and down the right where down the left is out of bounds and down the right are the stealthy reaches of Jock's Burn, or South America where the Barry Burn has to be carried with the shot to the green. South America, alias the tenth, was the destination of a son of Carnoustie who awoke on that hole after his farewell party and got no farther. But many a golting missionary did leave the little grey town for the New World, including Steward Maiden whose graceful Carnoustie swing was so faithfully assimilated by the young Bobby Jones that even those who knew

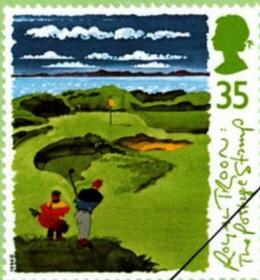


The Eighth at Royal Troon: Par Three 126 Yards is the Golf's philatelic nightmare, the Postage Stamp, is the shortest hole on the Open Championship rota. In the 1973 Open, the septuagenarian Gene Sarazen, holed in with a five-iron punched through the wind. He was to tell later of how, when the club head came into his head, strangely, been imbedded in his four-



ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER

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assimilated by the immortal Bobby Jones that even those who knew them well could not tell which was which in the distance.

The **35p** stamp features The Eighth at Royal Troon. Known as the "Postage Stamp" this is the shortest hole on the Open Championship rota. Many golfers, as their tee shot slithered off the putting surface into sand have reflected that, when they laid the "Postage Stamp", they did not do so "gummy side up".

The spectacularly photogenic Ninth at Turnberry on Turnberry's Ailsa course features on the **41p** stamp. In the best traditions of seaside golf, the vagaries of the weather add to the challenge. With the sun dancing on the waves and spume, it can be a golfing heaven. On the other hand, the sea can be dark and foaming with the wind screaming across the great links.

The five stamps have been designed by Paul Hogarth, RDI, who designed the 1984 London Economic Summit stamp, the 1985 350 years of Royal Mail set and 1990 Europa/Glasgow City of Culture issue.

Technical details

Printers: Harrison & Sons Ltd

Process: Photogravure

Size: 35 x 37 mm

Sheets: 100

Perforation: 14 x 14½

Phosphor: Phosphor Coated Paper

Paper: OBA free (OBA =
Optical Brightening Agent)

Gum: PVA Dextrin

Presentation Pack: No. 249, price £1.85

Stamp Cards: Nos 163 a-e, price 25p each.

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the

Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters around a week before 5 July, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps cancelled with a pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark of the Bureau or Turnberry, price £2.18 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.86 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 5 July.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Turnberry cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or



special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, George Square, GLASGOW G2 1AA. The outer envelope should be endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark".

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* - the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

Collectors are reminded that it will be in order to affix just the 19p Golf stamp to covers to receive all special cancels ("First Day of issue", sponsored and philatelic counter), in use on 5 July. The minimum 1st class rule is suspended on this day as the Golf set includes a 2nd class rate stamp. It should be noted that this concession applies only to the 19p Golf stamp; covers bearing other than Golf stamps must bear at least 1st class postage.