

## The Rough and the Fairway: Processes and Problems in Ryder Cup Team Selection 1927-2006<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

Competed for by European and American golfers, the Ryder Cup is unusual in professional sport as the participants play without financial reward using a team format in a game normally associated at their level with individual rivalry. This paper will outline the history of the competition, examine implications of the selection policies and procedures and discuss the issue of identity, particularly when the non-American opposition switched from being British to European. It will also add to the relatively sparse coverage of golf in academic literature. What has been written has focused on the gender divide<sup>2</sup>, the economics of the sport<sup>3</sup> and, more recently, the environment.<sup>4</sup> The Ryder Cup itself, whilst the subject of several popular works, has had only one academic article devoted to it on this side of the Atlantic.<sup>5</sup>

Most academic work on selection has centred on the politics of exclusion via segregation or discrimination, as in apartheid South Africa, or in the political use of discriminatory quotas, as in the same country post apartheid.<sup>6</sup> There is, however, an emerging debate in sports law on selection policies for teams as human rights legislation and a growing litigious tendency among athletes has encouraged sports associations to formally publish their selection policies and appeal procedures.<sup>7</sup> Even in a minority, relatively non-commercial sport such as orienteering the ruling body has acknowledged that this had to be done as 'selection is the most visible expression of the way in which we conduct our affairs; because of its wide reaching effects on athletes' careers and their confidence in the system; and because of the associated legal implications.'<sup>8</sup>

Much more academic literature exists on 'national' identity in sport though even here both the British and the European dimension have been relatively neglected. When looking at Britain a recent collection of essays on sport and national identity concentrated on English football, Welsh rugby, Scottish football and rugby, and football in the Republic of Ireland, eschewing any real consideration of British teams.<sup>9</sup> The concept of a European identity above a national one has been seen as a political not a sporting issue and hardly features in academic sports literature.<sup>10</sup>

### Background

The Ryder Cup owes its existence to the ill-health of a middle-aged English seed merchant. Advised by a friend to take up golf as an antidote to stress, Samuel Ryder became addicted to the game.<sup>11</sup> His passion for the sport led to him appointing Abe Mitchell, a leading British professional, as his personal golf tutor in 1925; this was a sinecure designed to allow Mitchell time to practise and compete effectively against the Americans who were beginning to dominate the Open Championship.<sup>12</sup> Ryder had a high regard for professional golfers and sponsored matches and even tournaments to assist their development.<sup>13</sup>

His patriotism and love of golf came together in an offer to award a trophy for an international match between representatives of the British and American Professional Golf Associations (PGAs), the two leading groups of golfers in the world. He had already funded a similar match at Wentworth in 1926 between British and American professionals prior to the latter playing the qualifying rounds for that year's Open.<sup>14</sup> Two years earlier he had sponsored a 72-hole fourball match between two Americans and two British players, one of them Abe Mitchell, and in 1925 he paid for a singles match between Mitchell and Jim Barnes, an Englishman who had emigrated to the States.<sup>15</sup> The competition for the Ryder Cup itself, a 100-guinea gold trophy with the figure of Abe Mitchell on top, began at the Worcester Country Club, Massachusetts in June 1927 when the hosts trounced their visitors 9½ - 2½.

The initial Deed of Trust by which Ryder donated the trophy had stated that the Cup should be played for on an annual basis, though this idea was quickly shelved and the competition became biennial, alternating with the Walker Cup for amateur golfers. In the six contests before the Second World War the home team triumphed on five occasions but the American victory at Southport in the last pre-war match was a portent of their coming domination. The first post-war match, held in Portland, Oregon, was a humiliating defeat for the British team by 11-1. Reminiscent of the mock obituary that created the Ashes in cricket sixty years before, one journalist wrote that 'Here, on November 2 1947, died British golf'.<sup>16</sup> There was no resurrection. From 1947 to 1983 Britain gained a solitary victory, at Lindrick in 1957, which brought a CBE for captain Dai Rees but no real change in the trend of match results. In 1975 after the Americans had won 8 of the last 9 matches and tied the other, Michael McDonnell, the *Daily Mail* golf correspondent, summed up popular opinion when he proclaimed 'the Ryder Cup passed away again yesterday. Not for just another two years but almost certainly for ever. There is no further point to this charade.'<sup>17</sup> American players were becoming uninterested; more significantly so was American television.

Following another British defeat on home ground at Lytham in 1977, golfing folklore has it that overtures from American golfing legend Jack Nicklaus to Lord Derby, President of the British PGA, led to an expansion of the British team to include players from elsewhere. Ten years earlier Bob Creasey of the United States PGA had sent a letter to the British PGA Executive requesting that the team be enlarged to include the Commonwealth countries but, mindful of possible political difficulties and a lessened audience at the next match, a decision was put off until after the 1969 event at Birkdale. This resulted in a conceded tie and the idea was shelved.<sup>18</sup> Nicklaus had offered the suggestion of an alliance of English-speaking countries as another alternative but the way forward was European-focused with the new political alignments and golfing logic coming together. In the late 1960s a European golf circuit developed which began to attract top players. In 1970 the French Open was included in the Order of Merit for Ryder Cup points and a year later the British and European tours were merged, essentially because it was believed that the British sponsorship market had reached its limit. This provided an opportunity for European and British players to compete regularly at the highest level. Moreover in 1975 the European Tour Players Division split from the PGA itself making the British tournament players' links with their European counterparts stronger.<sup>19</sup>

Introducing European players was not an immediate panacea. In 1979 two Spaniards justified the European nomenclature but the result was still a defeat. Two years later at Walton Heath the Europeans, this time with a German and a Spaniard, were thrashed 18½ to 9½: in mitigation their opponents were regarded as one of the strongest American teams ever as all but one of its members either had won or were to win a Major. Nor was it a case of third time lucky, though the American win in 1983 was by the narrowest of margins. Then came a reversal of fortunes. The most European team to that date, with four Spanish players and a German, gained a win at the Belfry in 1985, the date, according to team captain Tony Jacklin, that 'European golf came of age'.<sup>20</sup> This was followed by the first-ever Ryder Cup victory on an American course at Muirfield Village in 1987 before the cup was retained with a tie at the Belfry in 1989. The growing vigour of the European tour, aided perhaps by an expansion of prizemoney and no gaps in the weekly schedule of events, had strengthened the depth of the team. The match is no longer predictable: indeed the Europeans have won the last three, though this is still far from the earlier winning streaks of the Americans.

### **Selection**

Findlay and Corbett have pointed out that many selection decisions in representative sport are technically complex with policies relating to eligibility, selection and appeals written by people not skilled in drafting legislation. This can result in criteria that are 'vague, incomplete, contradictory and even silent on critical points'.<sup>21</sup> The Ryder Cup was no exception.<sup>22</sup>

The Deed of Trust for the Cup stipulated that players would be selected solely by their respective PGAs. Hence the 1926 match is regarded as a precursor to the Ryder Cup and not the first match as the American team on that occasion was selected by one of their players, Walter Hagen. What the Deed did not do was place any restrictions on how the teams were to be selected; in particular it set no birth or residential qualifications. For the 1927 and 1929 matches the Americans decided that their players should be native-born and resident in the United States thus ruling out stars such as Scotsman Tommy Armour and English emigrant Jim Barnes. The British PGA did not operate such restrictions, allowing them to play Aubrey Boomer who was a professional in France at the time. After discussion, a revised Deed of Trust was agreed which stipulated that the American practice was to be followed; thereafter Boomer, as well as Percy Alliss, a professional in Berlin, became ineligible.

Further conditions imposed on the British team by the PGA deprived it of one of its best players, Henry Cotton.<sup>23</sup> But according to his biographer,

The root cause of this situation was a conflict which was to bedevil Ryder Cup selection for years to come: whether selection to the team was to be an honour conferred by the Professional Golfers' Association for loyal and meritorious service or whether it should be a process of choosing the team most likely to win the trophy.<sup>24</sup>

Fifty years later, Robert Green, Assistant Editor of *Golf World*, indicated that little had changed. Top European golfers who regularly competed on the American circuit, such as Nick Faldo and Seve Ballesteros, were deemed ineligible, leaving a team

partially composed of lesser lights to contest the event. He echoed the earlier view: ‘a place in the team should not be seen as a reward for loyalty to the European circuit.’<sup>25</sup> Two years later Dobereiner re-iterated this position. He complained that the system for Ryder Cup selection was for plodders – ‘players who have scraped into the side by virtue of playing every tournament and racking up enough points from consistent finishes.’<sup>26</sup> The players themselves, however, preferred the more objective selection conferred by a money list or order of merit to the subjective committee or captain’s decision, in which favouritism or bias might play a part.

Before any team could be chosen it was necessary to select the selectors, and this in itself could be a controversial issue. Although the first Ryder Cup selection committee consisted of the famous playing triumvirate of Vardon, Braid and Taylor, most of those during the thirties were composed of five or six members of the PGA Executive Committee, normally the chairman, captain and secretaries of at least two regional committees. The immediate post-war years saw increasing friction between the regions, perhaps indicating the growing prestige and publicity surrounding the event – by 1953 the BBC had even expressed an interest in televising it. 1949 had seen nine nominations for four committee places. 1951 saw disputes between the major regional sections, each keen to have the privilege of a member on the selection committee. By 1953 open warfare had broken out; such heated discussions took place concerning the non-appointment of a representative from the northern section that the chairman had to appeal for unity. The issue was resolved only when it became apparent that the captain of the Association was currently a northern section member.<sup>27</sup> After such an unseemly episode, the PGA tournament committee took over the duties of Ryder Cup selection.

Who formed that committee continued to be a thorny issue. In 1963 five tournament committee members plus the Ryder Cup Captain had the power to co-opt yet more selectors; by 1967 there was a selection committee of six plus the Ryder Cup Captain. For the next decade the selectors were reduced to three, usually the present and a past Ryder Cup Captain, together with the leader in the Order of Merit. But even then there was no consistency. In 1969 and 1973 the past Captain was the immediate predecessor, in 1971 it was any previous Captain, in 1975 there was no stipulation about past captaincy and only two selectors were deemed necessary. Such a restricted choice still led to indecision: the Ryder Cup Captain and the leading player in the Order of Merit was later amended to the Captain and ‘any additional persons he wishes to nominate.’<sup>28</sup> By 1981, the situation resembled that of twenty years earlier, except the six selectors were chosen from the European Tour Board of Management Committee. This, it must be remembered, was merely to choose those entrusted with the power to select a team of twelve golfers.

Several methods of choosing players had been tried over the previous three decades: short lists of up to 30, trial matches, and automatic selection for the winners of major events had all formed part of the process. Final decision making, however, was by committee ‘after discussion’, sometimes ‘after considerable discussion’ although the first five or six names on the team sheet were often unanimous. The first instances of both ‘player power’ and automatic selection from an objective list occurred in 1955. A tournament committee of four was ultimately responsible for the decision but the initial choice was based on the seven leading players in the averages, who in turn assisted in choosing the remaining three. A Ryder Cup points system was instituted at

the end of that year and the top ten players in July 1957 formed the team, thereby diminishing the power of selectors. By 1959, a version of the 1955 system was back in place and these two methods – automatic selection from a list, or a hybrid ‘list plus selection by committee’ – held sway until the 1980s.

In 1971 Captain Eric Brown expressed a preference for greater personal selection instead of an automatic list and was reminded by fellow committee members that this ‘went completely against what the Tournament Committee appeared to have in mind.’<sup>29</sup> After several proposals and voting, he won the day, although the Tournament Committee later expressed disappointment that its unanimous recommendation for selection had been rejected. In 1981, it was suggested that the views of the team captain far outweighed those of his co-selectors, enabling him to exclude players whom he thought unsuitable for whatever reason.<sup>30</sup> The arrival of Tony Jacklin as Ryder Cup Captain for the remainder of the 1980s soon streamlined procedures and instituted the ‘Captain’s pick’. Jacklin demanded that he alone choose the final three players after the initial nine had been taken direct from the European prize money list, enabling those who plied their trade on the more lucrative American circuit to be part of the team. The influence of the Ryder Cup Captain on selection policy has been maintained ever since, although the number of wild cards has been reduced to two since 1995. Although the selectors now use a combination of world and European rankings, the major dilemma, however, has remained the same as that identified in the pre-war era: the fairest selection policy did not necessarily produce the strongest team. Should the team represent the best European players or the best players on the European Tour? The answer has sometimes depended on who held the captaincy.<sup>31</sup>

In spite of ongoing efforts to establish fair and reasonable selection methods, transparency has been difficult to achieve and anomalies have occurred. Seven meetings were held by the Ryder Cup selection committee of 1931. Four trial matches, comprising 24 players and 36 holes of golf, took place between February and May. Yet as a result of an ‘informal meeting’ of part of the committee and a subsequent phone call to the Chairman, a selected member of the team was asked to withdraw because of his lack of form. He had already spent the £50 allocated to him for the purchase of kit!<sup>32</sup> In a reverse scenario, the official history of the Ryder Cup indicates that Sandy Lyle, a likely ‘captain’s pick’ for the 1989 team, de-selected himself shortly before the selection deadline because of his poor form.<sup>33</sup> In 1959, when seven selected team members met with the tournament sub-committee to pick the remaining three from a short list of eight, a player whose name had not originally been included because he was unfit was unanimously chosen by his seven prospective team mates. Although a ballot took place among the selectors, as agreed in the rules, the addition of a new name caused another to be ousted. Unsurprisingly, the newly fit player was selected. And in a more recent controversy, Miguel Angel Martin, an automatic qualifier for the Ryder Cup team in 1997, was asked to take a late fitness test following injury. His failure to agree to this led to de-selection, allowing team captain Seve Ballesteros to pick the next man on the points table, who happened to be his long standing Ryder Cup playing partner Jose Maria Olazabal, as well as his two preferred wild cards. This sleight of hand enabled Ballesteros to field his ‘dream team’ and Europe retained the trophy.

This incident further highlights the power that can be wielded by a captain, the selection of whom has also proved to be controversial at times during the past eighty

years. Until 1963, most captains were also team players; since then they have been non-playing. Sometimes the captain was chosen by a PGA Executive Committee months ahead of the players and became a selector himself; on other occasions the captain was only selected once the team was known, with the opinions of team members taken into account. In 1955 two dozen leading professionals threatened to boycott any international match sponsored by the PGA unless they were satisfied with the selection committee and captain. Overtly this was a demand from these tournament professionals that Henry Cotton be chosen as captain, an appointment viewed with apprehension by some within the PGA executive. The opposition to Cotton reflected the second, initially more covert, motivation of the tournament players for greater representation on the executive. To Cotton and his colleagues the PGA was too much concerned with the club professional to the neglect of the tournament player who was attempting to make a living from competitive golf rather than from giving lessons and selling equipment. They demanded a majority on the tournament sub-committee and that the Ryder Cup captain be chosen by the team rather than the PGA executive. However, once greater representation was conceded they agreed that they need only be consulted about the captaincy.<sup>34</sup> In 1961 it was agreed that the captain should be nominated by the team yet by 1963 the decision was firmly back in the hands of a tournament committee. As the European tour strengthened so the selection system increasingly moved away from the PGA and to the tour professionals. Now it is the European Tour Tournament Committee that chooses the Ryder Cup captain, though this has to be formally ratified by the Ryder Cup Policy Board comprising six players on the European tour, two representatives of the PGA and two others from the PGAs of Europe.<sup>35</sup>

Selection does not end with the establishment of a team: players have still to be chosen to play. Unlike the Americans who used all team members from the outset, on the grounds that if you were picked you were good enough, their British counterparts have frequently left men out in order to play those in form. Two of the ten British golfers in 1929 were forced to sit out the contest; the same number in 1959. In more recent times, controversy has surrounded Captain Mark James' decision to omit players from the fourballs and foursomes at Brookline, only allowing them to compete in the singles on the final day.

### **Identity**

Until the advent of the Ryder Cup, golf at the professional level had been essentially an individual affair. Apart from some pre-war home internationals and the occasional professional foursomes competition, team golf was the province of the amateur club or county player not the professional out to make a living.<sup>36</sup>

Once professionals began to represent) their country, the issue arose of what) nation were they playing for. The concept of 'Britishness' had emerged during the (eighteenth century as inhabitants of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, the latter trio possibly due to covert pressure from England, began to regard themselves as British, though not necessarily to the exclusion of more localised nationalisms.<sup>37</sup> This dual identity has caused tensions and many from Ireland, Scotland, Wales and even England, whose nationals are most likely to use British interchangeably for their own nomenclature, now prefer to see themselves less as British and more as a member of one of the home countries.<sup>38</sup> In sport such narrower allegiances have generally dominated. Great Britain has rarely featured as a team in international elite sport. The

home nations refused to combine to play football in the Olympics; they did so in track and field but athletes were also offered the Empire, (later Commonwealth) Games where separatism was the rule; cricket was played under the banner of the MCC whilst commonly being called England even with players from the Celtic nations. There was, however, a precedent for a combined team in rugby union where a British Isles side has toured the southern hemisphere intermittently from 1888, though not always including players from all four home Unions.<sup>39</sup> There is recent evidence of British-wide loyalties in sport: significantly more home nationals would support a member of another home country against 'foreign' opposition than would not offer such backing.<sup>40</sup> If these contemporary surveys have any historical merit, the gelling of golfers from all over Britain into a British team should not have been a major problem. That said, most captains played safe by selecting the foursomes partnerships from golfers of the same nationality.

From the beginning the Ryder Cup team was labelled as being from Great Britain which excluded non-Ulster Irishmen as the Republic had separated politically in 1922 and its residents were considered as foreign players. But when a combined Irish PGA division was created in the early 1950s players from Eire became eligible for the Cup. The first golfer from the Republic to play in the Cup was Harry Bradshaw who was paired with Ulsterman Fred Daly in an unbeaten partnership in the 1953 tournament. Although born either side of the border the two were firm friends and had already represented the PGA in a four-man tour to South Africa in the winter of 1950-51,<sup>41</sup> Both men had won the Irish Professional Championship which had always been an all-Ireland affair. From then till 2006 a further 5 Ulstermen and 10 Irish Republicans have played with no hint of any political issues arising.

In most cases of international competition in sport, identification is fragmented within Europe by national affiliations. From 1979, however, golfers had to be brought together and identity constructed above the national level, what Albrecht Sonntag has termed a 'transfer of sympathies on a supra-national level'.<sup>42</sup> The concept of a European team was not totally revolutionary. The Ryder Cup innovation had been preceded by the European athletics team at the IAAF World Cup in 1977. However, there are differences between the two, primarily that the athletics team is a 'rest of Europe' team as the leading nation at the European Cup enters the World Cup as an individual country and, if held in Europe, the host nation can also take part with its own team. Additionally the World Cup only takes place every four years and, apart from the relays, is concerned with individual performances whereas the biennial Ryder Cup devotes two of its three days to foursomes and four-ball matches. There does not appear to have been any serious opposition, however, to the idea of a European golf team. If British professionals had any qualms about playing for Europe, they were pragmatic enough to realise that without extending the basis of their team there would be no Ryder Cup to play for. Mainland European golfers, who had no chance to represent their own nations, saw a new opportunity for international golf.

But to what extent was this a European team rather than a collection of British, Irish and continental European players, some of whom resided much of the year outside Europe? In initial European teams there were too few mainland Europeans to cause any problem. By 1983 when five continental Europeans were chosen Jacklin's policy as captain was to disregard the European dimension and exploit national pride by pairing Spaniard with Spaniard and Scot with Scot.<sup>43</sup> Most succeeding captains have

followed suit. Mark James, Captain of the European team in 1999, claimed that ‘on the tour we regard ourselves as all being European.’<sup>44</sup> Contrast this with the view of Randy Fox, an American who organised travel for players on the European tour in the early 1990s. He reckoned that there was a significant nationalistic divide:

The Swedes will not go out to dinner – with a few exceptions – with anyone else. They refuse to stay in a room unless it’s with another Swede. The Spaniards have never made any attempt to communicate with anyone else. The Italians are the same way .... And even among the British players, the Welsh don’t want to room with the Scottish and the Scottish don’t want to room with the English.<sup>45</sup>

Another travel organiser, David Grice, argued that the biggest clique on tour was the Scottish one.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless Fox accepted that there was no caste system among players on the European tour compared to the American where stars would not mix with the journeymen players; and current American captain Paul Azinger has acknowledged that the Europeans have exhibited more in the way of camaraderie than his own compatriots.<sup>47</sup> Possibly Irishman Pádraig Harrington summed up the Ryder Cup situation when he maintained that what they were really representing was their tour rather than any country or collection of nations.<sup>48</sup> And who could blame him for that? The European tour provided most members of the team with their livelihoods; it had grown from a prize fund of £250,000 when it was formed in 1972 to one of over £73 million by 2004?

Any unity within the team is possibly more anti-American than pro-Europe, perhaps based on golf politics rather than global ones. Although the press at different times may have utilised stereotypes of American arrogance, militant nationalism and lack of etiquette to promote an anti-Americanism in their readership, for the European players the issue may have been more one of resentment. Americans have attempted to dominate the professional game by holding three of the four major tournaments within the United States. There are also objections to the insularity of most American professionals who will not travel the world to play so content are they with the level of prize-money offered within the United States.

The blue European Union flag seems to have been adopted as the banner under which the team plays, possibly as a response to the American Stars and Stripes.<sup>49</sup> Yet it is a flag of convenience rather than one of unity. The official post-match photograph of the victorious European team shows two of the players holding European flags (Spaniard Jose Maria Olazabal and Englishman Paul Casey) while Irishmen Paul McGinley and Pádraig Harrington wore tricolour scarves and Scotsman Colin Montgomerie had a saltire draped over his shoulder. Clearly for the European players unity has not eclipsed more local nationalisms. In this they were merely representing Europe in a different sense. Although a 2005 survey showed that over 60% of Europeans felt ‘proud’ to be Europeans, it also revealed that they showed greater pride in their individual nations.<sup>50</sup> Hence Europatriotism can be regarded as a weak sentiment that supplements national pride rather than replacing it. The Ryder Cup players exhibit weak political identity but a strong team ethic.



The Ryder Cup has had a limited impact on 'Europeanness'. The fact that political and economic eurosceptics do not seem to denigrate the idea of a European golf team might suggest that it is not really viewed as a symbol of European integration, or, more likely, that sport is too trivial to concern them.<sup>51</sup> As sports journalist Simon Kuper has put it: 'the contest [would be] an ideal candidate for boosting European identity, except for the fact that most Europeans have never heard of it.'<sup>52</sup> Golf is still not a major pan-European sport. Britain has more courses than Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Switzerland and the Nordic countries combined.<sup>53</sup>

The lack of a European fan base has been reflected in the decisions to allocate venues in which continental Europe has scarcely featured. European players began to play on the Ryder Cup team in 1979 but not till 1997 was a non-English or Scottish site selected when the event was hosted by the Valderrama club in Spain. The next home match was back at the Belfry, thus reverting to the status quo. The decisions to hold the Ryder Cup in Ireland (2006), Wales (2010) and Scotland (2014) and at a yet to be determined mainland European course in 2018 owe less to Celtic and European integration and more to the economics of the PGA Tour. Once the Ryder Cup was reignited as a truly competitive event clubs vied to host it and were willing to pay for the privilege. The K Club in Ireland promised a ten-year deal to host the European Open; Celtic Manor in Wales offered a long-term hosting of the Wales Open; and Gleneagles in Scotland agreed to a permanent Johnnie Walker Championship. Even the earlier hosting of the Ryder Cup at Valderrama in 1997 was only partly a belated recognition of the Spanish contribution to the European team; it also necessitated the Spanish PGA and the Valderrama club holding almost forty tournaments for the European Tour and its various satellites.<sup>54</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Selection policies for the Ryder Cup have been subject to complaint and criticism but never legal challenge. As an autonomous, self-governing organisation the PGA (and later the European Tournament Players Association) has the power to make rules and regulations affecting its members, including those dealing with Ryder Cup selection.<sup>55</sup> As 'monopoly' organisations the PGA and ETPA are in a position to insist that membership itself is a requirement for selection. A golf professional need not be a member of the PGA or the European Tour but, unless he is, he cannot play in the Ryder Cup as this is a competition between the two players' associations not between golfers from Britain and the United States. However legal cases in other sports have demonstrated that actual selection decisions can be challenged on several grounds including incorrectly interpreting the rules of selection, not following stated procedures, changing the regulations after they had been announced to obtain an 'acceptable' result, and bias (as distinct from reasonably held opinion) on the part of a selector. As shown above, all of these have occurred at times in the process of choosing the Ryder Cup team. Yet, unlike in other sports, neither the law courts nor even the Court of Arbitration for Sport has seen the process or procedures contested. Golf has not followed where other sports have led the way.

In contrast, where *European* teams are concerned, golf has been the pioneer but other sports have been reluctant to tag along. Indeed, except in golf, the Ryder Cup has not led to further integrated European sports teams. Perhaps this has been because the Ryder Cup itself was in a unique position: it needed European players in order to survive as an international competition. Their introduction ultimately led to boom

rather than just survival. Other spin-offs in golf have followed including the Seve Ballesteros Trophy, in which a team from Great Britain and Ireland plays against one from continental Europe, and the Solheim Cup for female professionals from Europe and the United States. However, other sports have not felt the necessity to follow suit, either because club and national followings are considered satisfactory or there is no obvious opponent at such a supra-national level.

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<sup>1</sup> The authors are grateful to the Leverhulme Trust and the British Academy for financial assistance towards the research costs of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> Recent works include Lee McGinnis, Julia McQuillan and Constance L. Chapple, 'I Just Want to Play: Women, Sexism and Persistence in Golf', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 29,3 (August 2005), 313-337; David Nyland, 'Taking a Slice at Sexism: The Controversy over Excluding Membership Practices at the Augusta National Golf Club', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 27 (May 2003), 195-202; Marnie Haig-Muir, 'Many a Slip 'twixt Cup and the Lip: Equal Opportunity and Victorian Golf Clubs', *Sporting Traditions* 17,1 (November 2000), 19-38; Jane George, Joyce Kay and Wray Vamplew, 'Women to the Fore: Gender Accommodation and Resistance at the British Golf Club Before 1914', *Sporting Traditions* (forthcoming 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Ray Physick and Richard Holt, "'Big Money": The Tournament Player and the PGA, 1945-75', *Contemporary British History* 14, 2 (2000), 60-80.

<sup>4</sup> Kit Wheeler and John Nauright, 'A Global Perspective on the Environmental Impact of Golf', *Sport in Society* 9,3 (2006), 427-443.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Morrow and Graeme Wheatley, 'The Ryder Cup 2014: Golf's Homecoming?', *Scottish Affairs* 43, (Spring 2003), 108-126.

<sup>6</sup> For a bibliography on this see Robert Chappell, 'Race, Gender and Sport in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Sport Journal* 8,4 (2004) accessed online at [www.thesportjournal.org](http://www.thesportjournal.org)

<sup>7</sup> Hilary A. Findlay and Rachel Corbett, 'Principles Underlying the Adjudication of Selection Disputes Preceding the Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games: Notes for Adjudicators', *Entertainment Law* 1,1 (2002), 109-120; Ross Thompson, 'The Form for Selection', *The Journal: The Journal of the Law Society of Scotland* (March 2006), 45.

<sup>8</sup> [www.britishorienteering.org.uk](http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk); accessed 19 April 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Adrian Smith and Dilwyn Porter (eds.), *Sport and National Identity in the Post-War World* (Routledge, London 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Albrecht Sonntag, 'Tears, Sweat and ... Fun! Self-reflexive Irony as a Feature of European Identity', paper presented at CESH Conference on Sport and the Construction of Identities, Vienna 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Fry, *Samuel Ryder: The Man Behind the Ryder Cup* (Wright: Dorset, 2000), 66-75.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 95 .Mitchell received a three-year contract giving him £500 and £250 in expenses per annum.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 81.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 100-101.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 84-89.

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- <sup>16</sup> Geoffrey Cousins, 'Golf' in John Rivers, *The Sports Book* (Macdonald, London 1948), 85.
- <sup>17</sup> *Daily Mail*, 22 September 1975.
- <sup>18</sup> Richard Holt, Peter N. Lewis and Wray Vamplew, *The Professional Golfers' Association 1901-2001* (Grant, Worcestershire, 2002), 148.
- <sup>19</sup> Physick and Holt, 71.
- <sup>20</sup> Quoted in Holt, Lewis and Vamplew, 211.
- <sup>21</sup> Findlay and Corbett, 115.
- <sup>22</sup> The discussion which follows is based on material in the Minute Books of the PGA held at the Belfry, Sutton Coldfield. The authors are grateful for access.
- <sup>23</sup> The team was expected to travel to and from America as a group. Cotton asked if he could remain there after the Ryder Cup as he wanted to play some tournaments but permission was refused. Peter Dobereiner, *Maestro: The Life of Henry Cotton* (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1992), 32.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>25</sup> *Golf World*, May 1983.
- <sup>26</sup> *Golf World*, September 1985.
- <sup>27</sup> PGA Minutes, 12 January 1953.
- <sup>28</sup> PGA Minutes, 14 July 1975.
- <sup>29</sup> PGA Minutes, 5 January 1971.
- <sup>30</sup> Peter Alliss in *Golf World*, December 1981.
- <sup>31</sup> The only other example of a playing captain having a say in the selection of a national team was in cricket where from 1898 when the establishment of a Board of Control led to a selection committee of three who chose a captain who was then co-opted to the committee itself. In 1938 the committee was increased to four plus the captain who now had the casting vote. (Maurice Golesworthy, *The Encyclopedia of Cricket* (Sportsman's Book Club: London, 1964). However, it should be noted that those were the days when amateur captains, with associated class connotations, were the norm.
- <sup>32</sup> PGA Minutes, 15 May 1931.
- <sup>33</sup> Michael Williams, *The Official History of the Ryder Cup 1927-1989* (Stanley Paul, London, 1989), 174.
- <sup>34</sup> Physick and Holt, 64-66.
- <sup>35</sup> In the late 1980s there was conflict between the PGA and the European Tour over who 'owned' the Ryder Cup. The trophy had been donated in perpetuity to the [British] PGA but now the players who represented Europe were no longer so aligned with the club professional as in the early days of the Cup. A compromise was agreed which distinguished between the PGA as a Founding Partner and the European Tour as the Managing Partner.
- <sup>36</sup> Wray Vamplew, 'Exploited labour or successful workingmen: golf professionals and professional golfers in Britain before 1914', *Economic History Review* (forthcoming 2007).
- <sup>37</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (omissions 1992); Norman Davies, *The Isles* (omissions 1999).
- <sup>38</sup> National Centre for Social Research, *British Social Attitudes* 17<sup>th</sup> Report (ed. Jowell et al) 2000/01, 156-158; 18<sup>th</sup> Report (ed. Park et al) 2001/02, 242; The Institute for Public Policy Research, *Who Are We? Identities in Britain* (2007).

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<sup>39</sup> Historically the team used the title British Isles, adopting the nickname British Lions in 1950, though in 2001 the more politically correct British and Irish Lions was agreed by the Unions involved.

<sup>40</sup> National Centre for Social Research 2000/01, 161.

<sup>41</sup> [www.rydercup2000.ie](http://www.rydercup2000.ie)

<sup>42</sup> Sonntag, loc. cit.

<sup>43</sup> *Golf World*, October 1983, 44-45.

<sup>44</sup> *Scotland on Sunday*, 19 May 2002, p. 11.

<sup>45</sup> Lauren St John, *Shooting at Clouds: Inside the European PGA Tour* (Mainstream, Edinburgh, 1991), 51

<sup>46</sup> Lauren St John, *Out of Bounds: Inside Professional Golf* (Partridge, London, 1995), 198.

<sup>47</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, Sport, 7 Nov 2006 S17.

<sup>48</sup> *Financial Times*, 16 September 2006, p.12.

<sup>49</sup> This was probably without formal permission as this is unlikely to be granted 'in a commercial context' which is undoubtedly what the Ryder Cup is now involved in.

<sup>50</sup> *Financial Times*, 16 September 2006, p.12.

<sup>51</sup> Despite the European Year of Sport in 2004 sport does not figure high in European political discussion and commentary.

<sup>52</sup> *Financial Times*, 16 September 2006, p.12.

<sup>53</sup> *Financial Times*, 16 September 2006, p.12.

<sup>54</sup> David David, 'The Greatest Sporting Contest of Them All', *Sunday Telegraph*, 17 September 2006, S3. See also Morrow and Wheatley.

<sup>55</sup> Findlay and Corbett, 109-113.