

The Golf Chronicles

Golf Stories from the Pennsylvania Heartland

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Practice? Who needs it!

The Golf Chronicles continues a series on the golfing life of Edith Quier Flippin, Berks County's premier woman amateur golfer.

Seventy years before Allen Iverson of the Philadelphia 76ers entertained all with his legendary practice rant, 25-year-old Edith Quier shared her feelings on practice with the *Reading Times* in an article published April 16, 1930.

And like basketball star, Miss Quier had no time for practice. She was just back from playing in the North and South championship at Pinehurst. She had completed 18 holes at Berkshire County Club, buzzing around with a friend in 82 strokes, recording her score in her head, not on paper.

She wore no brimmed hat to ward off the sun. Her suntanned face was dotted with faint freckles. Her five-foot seven-inch frame was topped with light brown hair that had never been bobbed because she detested shorn locks.

She walked from the 18th green to the golf shop where she retrieved her pocketbook, which was in the safe custody of the golf pro, as was the custom of Berkshire's women golfers. Miss Quier entertained the *Reading Times* reporter Dora Lurie in Berkshire's spacious club house.

"I just happened in golf," she replied to a query about the reason for her success in the game. This was just a few days after her 1-down loss to Glenna Collett, the best woman golfer in the United States, in the final match at Pinehurst. She had also recently vanquished such golf luminaries as Mrs. Dorothy Campbell Hurd, Helen Hicks, Virginia Van Wei and Maureen Orcutt.

Golf is for fun, she said, and acknowledged that she has a nervous attitude before matches. She was not particular about her clubs and was at that time awaiting delivery of a new set from her father, just the second she had ever had. She was hoping to have the new set before sailing to England for matches against the British team.

"But the clubs will not affect my game," she said. "I have been so used to borrowing the family sticks. I am the youngest at home. My mother, father, sister and brother all have played before me and so it was natural that I profited by all the hand-me-down paraphernalia. Whenever I felt like playing, I just picked up the first set handy and away I went."

Play the course. It wasn't the clubs that made her a top-notch player, nor was it hours spent on the range, hitting balls for hours. Instead, she found that playing the course was the best way to sharpen her game. Miss Quier did practice putting, which was a strong part of her game. But she preferred to spend her time far from the practice tee, enjoying other pursuits such as dancing.

At that point in her golfing life, she had equaled the Berkshire men's par of 76. She allowed, however, that she would practice for the upcoming trip to Europe because she knew her team was expecting big things from her.

"You know I am cold blooded. Why, down in Pinehurst last week I wore three sweaters at one time and I am taking plenty of warm clothing to England," she said. Although she had never played in England, she was aware of the problems playing in cold weather created for Glenna Collett in the 1929 British championship match that she lost to England's Joyce Wethered.

She would travel light: "We are not taking any trunks. Only two bags and our equipment." She had played in China and Japan, so she was an experienced international traveler.

A sporting life. Her athletic endeavors included playing basketball and field hockey in high school and college. She was keen on tennis and willing to try almost any sport.

"I get to the finals and near the top in a lot of tournaments but I always am defeated," she said laughingly. "But maybe some day the world will not be so topsy-turvy."

Prophetic words, because later that year, she won her first significant title, the Griswold Cup. For that story, turn to The Golf Chronicles #95, [Edith Cops Two Cups](#).

Practice? We're talking about practice? Not a game...Not the game that I go out there and die for and play every game like it's my last?"

—Allen Iverson, May 7, 2002