

Only balls allowed...



Golf. A game as deep rooted in tradition and etiquette as
Afternoon Tea is at The Ritz.

It's beginnings originate from Scotland, because a chap was
playing a game of hitting pebbles into a loch with a stick. If
I sit and try to imagine this, I have visions of a rugged
landscape, a burly bearded man and the sounds of nature.
Simple, pure, escapism.

I guess not much has changed in that respect. It's still essentially men, hitting things towards a target in often beautiful and serene landscapes in order to amuse themselves. What's not to love about golf from that point of view? But one thing has changed since those days of the man on the loch, and that is, women. Women have changed.

We are no longer just homemakers, baby incubators, cooks, cleaners, something pretty to be paraded around on a man's arm. We are much more than that. We are politicians, we are surgeons, we are teachers, we are influential. The list can go on and on. And, would you believe it, we are actually pretty damn good at sports.

I know! Shock, horror, gasp! Us mere women, with our apparent fragile dispositions, weak muscles and boobs can actually join in with sports and often, excell at them.

Times have changed, and are still changing, and luckily for us here in the UK, equality between the sexes is now more achievable than ever. Women can go for the same jobs as men, we are allowed to vote, there are laws to help prevent discrimination, we can do whatever we would like to do.

The Suffragettes fought for our cause many years ago, and the fruits of their labour are now being felt all around our great Isle. We are forever in their debt.

So, I can well imagine what Emmeline, Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurt's reaction would have been yesterday when news broke of a golf club in Scotland voting to retain their ban on women members, and therefore loosing out on hosting one of the biggest golf tournaments in the world. I think it is pretty safe to say they would have at least tutted a bit and perhaps made a plaquard to express their disgust – they were known to have vandalised a few golf courses in their time for much the same reason...

In the year 2016, over 100 years since the Suffragettes fought

for our cause, we are still at the mercy of men and their ideals in some respects. A quick google of 'funny golf quotes' and you get an array of sexist golf pictures and cartoons spring up. In some respects, things haven't moved on at all where sport, and most certainly golf, are concerned. Don't get me wrong, there are a huge amount of golf clubs which realise that it's 2016 and that you cannot ban women from playing at your course, but then there are places like Muirfield which still harbour this idealistic, sexist, view, that women are not good enough to be in the company of men and play on their greens.

Muirfield is a golf club steeped in tradition. On the shores of the Firth of Forth, it stands majestically, overlooking the sea. It's a truly stunning golf course in a beautiful location.

Who wouldn't want the chance to play there?!

The club has always been 'men only' or 'only balls allowed' as I now like to say.

In order to host the Open Championship, the club had to change it's stance and accept women so that the ladies competition could also take place.

A vote took place and the result came back in yesterday...

64% for the change to 36% against it. As they needed a 2/3 majority, the vote could not go ahead and the changes that should have been made, couldn't be.

So near, and yet so far.

The votes were cast via a postal ballot so the members didn't even have to see each other and show their faces.

"Just tick a box sir and you can get on with your day, we know how busy you are, because you're a man". Thank you very much.

Sadly, 36% of those men ticked the wrong box. The 'I've got a

penis so therefore I'm better than you' box.

Within moments of the decision being announced, Martin Slumbers, the chief executive of the Royal and Ancient, which organises the tournament, responded with a statement saying the championship would not be held at a venue that did not admit female members. Good for him. A voice of reason in an utterly maddening situation.

Mr Slumbers said, "The R&A has considered today's decision with respect to the Open championship. The Open is one of the world's great sporting events and going forward we will not stage the championship at a venue that does not admit women as members. Given the schedule for staging the Open, it would be some years before Muirfield would have been considered to host the championship again. If the policy at the club should change, we would reconsider Muirfield as a venue for the Open in future."

A round of applause for Mr Slumbers, please, if you will...

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[The top 10 Sexiest Females in Golf](#)

...only gentle, girlie claps though please. No cheering or whooping. We are ladies after all...

The depth of hostility felt by some traditionalist members at Muirfield, towards the admission of women, emerged when journalists were told that a group of about 30 members had written anonymously to their fellow golfers before the ballot, urging them to reject the changes.

The letter argued that, and quote, "a traditional resistance to change is one of the foundations of our unique position in golf and our reputation", it stated that "the introduction of lady members is bound to create difficulties", suggesting that

women's presence would "endanger foursomes and speedy play".

Endanger foursomes. Come on?! Really?!

For those of you who aren't sure what a foursome is, it is where a group of people decide to pleasure...

...ah, right, he wasn't talking about that kind of foursome. Silly me, you'll have to forgive me, I am only a woman after all.

A foursome is where you play as a group of 4 and you split into pairs. Each player in each pair hits every other shot, so if one hits the tee shot, the other plays the second shot and they then alternate on every shot until their ball is holed out. It's all balls and holes, balls and holes is golf.

Why women would jeopardise this type of play I have no idea. Maybe we can't count up to 4 so will play with 6 people and mess it up? Maybe we would forget whose turn it was because we were thinking about how pretty the flowers are. I've no idea what the chuff he is talking about to be honest.

It went on: "Our special nature – 'a gentleman's club where golf is played' – is quite unique with its fraternity built inter alia on foursomes play with a round taking only the same time as lunch and leaving enough time for a further round after lunch (even in mid-winter)."

Right, well lucky you getting to be out all day swinging your golf club around with your fraternity pals in your jolly 'balls only' foursomes. I'm sure your wife back home is actually glad of the peace and quiet it brings when you bugger off to play a round or two. Utter idiot. Can you tell I perhaps feel slight contempt for the man??

I didn't realise, but Clare Balding actually refused to present the golf for the BBC from Muirfield before now because of their stance on not letting women play there. Good for her.

I love Clare I do.

And as much as I dislike Nicola Sturgeon, she too has waded in to the argument to reiterate how such an old fashioned ideal is not acceptable in an age where women can lead countries, but they can't wack a ball around on a hallowed piece of testicle riddled turf. Those aren't her words, they're mine, but she was hinting at much the same thing... ☐

I understand tradition. I understand passion. But I don't understand this decision at all.

I understand that this is a private club, which the members pay a lot of money to join, so therefore they should be able to say what happens in their own club, but I just still can't quite believe in the year 2016, men feel so passionately about women being a nuisance that they would still vote to keep them out of their golf club...unless they're cleaning it or serving them food and drink that is. Then it's ok.

They claim it is ok and quite frankly, it isn't. They justify themselves by saying, "anyway, women are allowed in the club house". Yes, they are my sperm carrying friend, but only as long as they are married to (or perhaps are just copping off) with one of the male members. That makes it alright then doesn't it.

I don't have daughters, I have sons, but if I did, I would probably feel even more strongly about the message this decision is sending to the girls of today, the women of tomorrow.

I know the women have the WI, which is women only, but the men have numerous clubs, exclusive meeting places just for them, which women are not entitled to go in (unless they're wearing not much more than a golf club to protect their modesty...) but this is different. This is sport. An all inclusive, let's all get along and celebrate equality, activity. Well, at least that's how it should be. The WI in fact claims that they have

nothing against men joining them, the fact is, none have wanted to. There isn't a rule against it.

Yesterday's decision feels like a backward step. A slap around our blusher covered cheeks. And I'm not sure what the answer is.

Scotland as an economy is set to loose at least £100 million in income due to this decision. How can a group of pompous, idealistic, sexist, scrotum owning men dictate that an entire economy loses out just because of their ignorance. It's utter madness.

Anyhow, I'm finished ranting for now. I might take my womanly behind off to the coast to wack some pebbles into the sea with a stick...

Feel free to agree, disagree (which I am sure a lot of people will do) and share.



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