

# *Nederlandsch Golf Comité*

SECRETARIAAT: VAN ALKEMADELAAN 676 - 'S-GRAVENHAGE - TELEFOON 070-240698

S.J.H. van Hengel  
Saxenroedeweg 30  
Aerdenhout.

's-Gravenhage, March 21st, 1972

Donald Steel Esq.,  
2 Moor Park Gardens  
Moor Park,  
N o r t h w o o d, Middlesex.

Dear Mr. Steel,

Mr. Poldervaart has handed me your letter of the 8th of this month for reply, history of golf being my speciality. Let me begin by thanking you for your letter

In reply to your questions: the five oldest golf clubs in the Netherlands are:

1. Haagsche Golf & Country Club founded in 1890 as the Haagsche Golf Club;
2. Utrechtsche Golf Club "de Pan" founded in 1892 as the Doornsche Golf Club;
3. Rosendaelsche Golf Club at Arnhem founded in 1896;
4. Kennemer Golf & Country Club founded in 1910 as Kennemer Golf Club;
5. Hilversumsche Golf Club also founded in 1910.

During World War I the Netherlands remained neutral so golf-clubs were unaffected except for members and staff being drafted into armed services and golf equipment not being readily available.

World War II was an other matter.

The clubs that suffered the worst damage were those located near the shore because fortifications for the Atlantic Wall were built right across them. This was the case at the Domburgse Golf Club, the Haagsche Golf & Country Club, the Noordwijksche Golf Club and the Kennemer Golf & Country Club.

The Haagsche decided to move their entire club from the old course at Waalsdorp and take over the course in nearby Wassenaar where they are now located.

The other three rebuilt their courses at great expense over a number of years. Needless to say that play came to a complete standstill on these courses during the second half of the second World War.

Golf is doing well at present in this country. New courses are under construction in Noordwijk ( 18 holes to replace the old 9-holes course ), de Gelpenberg ( in Drenthe province, 9 holes ) in the province of Limburg ( 9-holes ) near Bergen-op-Zoom (9-holes).

Improvised 9-holes public courses are drafted in Amsterdam ( 2 9-holes courses of which one became operative in 1971 ) and at Haarlem ( 9-holes ).

North of Haarlem an ambitious 27-holes public-course project is under way and the U.S. Golf Inns have a project for a 9-holes course near Arnhem under way.

Finally, about the origin of golf: over the last 20 years I have gone into some fairly profound research on this subject. This research is not yet completely worked out but a first rough draft of the results is available.

Thinking that the contents might interest you I am enclosing a copy of this draft for your perusal.

I may ask you to return that draft to me. If you would wish to publish anything out of it, I would ask you to let me have the article in question for approval.

The dutch version of "Early Golf" is completed and at the printers and will eventually appear in the dutch "Golf" monthly, accompanied by quite some rather pleasant and unknown illustrative material.

Eventually this might also be made available.

If you wish to have further information do not hesitate to write.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours faithfully,

S.J.H. van Hengel,  
Hon. Treasurer.

SvH/vb



## HOLLAND

Golfers have been arguing for years about the origins of the game and it seems that nobody will ever produce an answer that will satisfy everyone. It is true that the field can be limited between the Scots and the Dutch and that the real point at issue is whether the game of Kolf or Kolven which has been played in Holland since the Middle Ages is an authentic forerunner to golf or just one with <sup>a strong</sup> ~~an old~~ resemblance.

Early Dutch artists have revealed several forms of Kolf, particularly one played on ice and another, still common today, which takes place in a confined space. A portrait of the "Young Golfer" <sup>dated 1635</sup> which hangs in the Kennemer Golf and Country Club ~~also~~ certainly shows unmistakably that he is holding a golf club but after the diligent and valuable researches of S.J.H. van Hengel in a booklet, "Early Golf History and Development" published in 1971, the author makes no claims "to prove conclusively where golf came into its own and when exactly the present indoor game of Kolf started."

If some doubt, ~~surrounds~~ however, surrounds the early days of golf in Holland, the modern side of the story dates from 1890 when the Haagsche Golf ~~and Country~~ Club was founded. Utrechtsche Golf Club "de Pan" followed in 1892 as the <sup>the</sup> Doornsche Golf Club, Rosendalsche Golf Club at Arnhem in 1896, and the Kennemer and Hilversumsche Clubs in 1910.

Progress was steady as the game increased in popularity during the First and Second World Wars and the Dutch Open championship was started in 1919. Two years later, the Dutch International Amateur and Ladies' championships got under way but, sadly, play came to a standstill during the German occupation of the Second World War and several ~~clubs~~ courses suffered damage and temporary destruction.

The worst affected were those along the coast such as Domburgse, Haagsche, Noordvijsche and Kennemer owing to the building of fortifications for the Atlantic Wall. It resulted, in fact, in the Haagsche Club moving house from Waalsdorp to nearby Wassenaar but slowly the other three Clubs rebuilt their courses at great expense over a number of years and gradually Dutch golf found its feet again.



Golf is at present doing well in Holland and the total number of courses, 22 in 1971, continues to rise with several new projects including a fine new, seaside layout at Noordwijk and new public courses in Amsterdam and Haarlem; and an ambitious 27 hole scheme north of Haarlem.

The most famous Dutch players over the years have been the professionals, Gerry de Wit and Martin Roesink, and the young lady golfer, Miss Joyce de Witt Ruyt.





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2 Moor Park Gardens  
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March 27th 1972

Dear Mr van Hengel,

Thank you so much for your letter and for all the information contained therein. It was just what was wanted. I am most interested, too, by your admirable booklet and learned a lot. I have not taken anything directly from it but I should be most appreciative if you would look over the enclosed article on Dutch golf which I have prepared.

Please feel free to criticise and correct it as much as you like. It is, as you can see, a copy, and not a very clean one either. For this I apologise. I should also explain that this will comprise an entirely separate entry from the individual Dutch Clubs (six or seven of them) and is intended as a broad commentary on the development and the present state of golf in Holland. We plan one of these for every golfing country of the world.

With all best wishes and repeated thanks.

Yours sincerely,

*Donald Steel*

DONALD STEEL

April 18th, 1972.

Donald Steel Esq.,  
Rainbird Reference Books Limited,  
Marble Arch House,  
44, Edgware Road,  
London W2.

Dear Mr. Steel,

This is to thank you for your letter of March 27th, 1972. I regret to be late in answering. Since I returned from a holiday abroad only recently, I could not send you an earlier reply.

I fully agree with the draft article which you sent me and I would appreciate a copy of your writings once they have appeared in prints.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature, possibly 'SvH', written in dark ink. It consists of a large, stylized 'S' or '7' shape with a loop at the top and a long, thin vertical stroke extending downwards.

SvH/vb





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April 24th 1972

Dear Mr Van Hengel,

Thank you so much for your letter and for so kindly reading through my article. I am glad to hear that you think it is satisfactory.

Publication will be a little while yet. We hope to have everything ready for printing by the end of July but, with such an enormous work, the publishers and producers require about a year before it will be on sale but I will try and keep you informed when the great day arrives.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

*Donald Steel*

Donald Steel

# THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

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March 8th 1972

Dear Mr Poldervaart,

You may remember that we corresponded last year about the entries from Holland for our International Encyclopaedia of Golf. I have been in touch with all Clubs you recommended and they have been kind enough to send the information we required. For this, we are most grateful. Other countries have not been so helpful.

The only item outstanding is the history of golf in the Netherlands and I am working on this at present. I know the theories on the very early origins and can make reference to the article which you sent but I would be grateful if you could list the six oldest Clubs in Holland together with the year in which they were founded.

Could you also tell me what effect the First World War had upon golf and the courses in Holland? I gather that damage during the Second War was pretty extensive and that a lot of clubs were effected. If there are any other little details which you think would be of interest, I would be glad to have them.



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I am sorry to trouble you again but you can appreciate the difficulty of collecting material and have to refer to the official source.

I very much hope to be over for the Dutch Open this year and to cover it for the Daily and Sunday Telegraph. I therefore look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

Donald Steel

DONALD STEEL