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Article Title: "There is no Discrimination Here, But the Committee Never Elects Jews": Anti-Semitism in British Golf, 1894-1970

Abstract: Between the 1890s and the 1960s, Jews faced significant levels of racial discrimination within British golf. Anti-Semitism originating from individuals, private clubs, the golfing press and golfing authorities was prevalent across large parts of the last century and was geographically widespread (affecting every sizeable Jewish community in Great Britain). Mirroring wider majority community discrimination towards the growing middle-class Jewish population, Jewish golfers faced racial hostility and exclusion within golf – a racism which was driven by crude stereotypes, snobbery, ignorance and a basic irrational fear of the 'other'.

Golfing racism was powerful and extensive within Britain, yet Jews did not simply accept the hostility they faced and cease playing the sport. Whilst this article will illustrate and analyse anti-Semitism within British golf, it will also highlight the response to discrimination taken by Jewish communities – large and small – across the country. Unwilling to allow anti-Semitism to prevent their participation in the sport, Jewish golfers strove to create their own clubs and courses. Symbolically, these 'Jewish' organisations remained open to all, regardless or race or creed. Jews not only protected their own sporting interests in the face of a non-organised form of anti-Semitism, but also provided a retort to golfing bigotry and racism.

Keywords: Jews, Jewish, sport, golf, anti-semitism

"There is no Discrimination Here, But the Committee Never Elects Jews": Anti-Semitism in British Golf, 1894-1970

In the spring of 1960, the *Jewish Chronicle* published the findings of an investigation into the prevalence of anti-Semitism within British golf. Over the course of four weeks the newspaper's correspondent, tasked with answering the question 'How extensive is discrimination against Jews in golf clubs?', painted a picture of a sport plagued by latent and widespread hostility towards Jewish golfers. The reports noted that 'throughout the country' golf clubs were practising 'discrimination against Jewish applicants'. It was highlighted that Jews were not only being summarily banned and excluded from private clubs due to their ethnicity, but they were also being subjected to inhibitive quota systems or the simple ignorance by golf clubs keen to limit the

number of Jewish members. The correspondent uncovered an unapologetic and unashamedly anti-Semitic attitude within many golfing establishments. Although many clubs refused to comment on their membership policy, others were much more willing proffer their views concerning prospective Jewish members. For instance, one club secretary claimed that 'we would not say we bar Jews. We just prefer not to take them', whilst another noted 'there is no discrimination here, but the Committee never elects Jews'.[1]

Anti-Semitism within British golf was not limited to this era nor to just private clubs. Since the late nineteenth century, Jews interested in golf have not only faced hostility and discrimination from clubs, but have also suffered anti-Semitism at the hands of the golfing authorities and the press. Across a large part of the twentieth century, a significant proportion of Jewish golfers have been affected either directly or indirectly by anti-Semitism within the sport in Britain. Whilst not all would have been on the receiving end of a rejected membership application driven by racial hostility, the vast majority would have found where they played – and who they played with – limited as a result of discrimination.

Within the existing historiography concerning British anti-Semitism, discrimination in golf has not been comprehensively addressed. More generally, whilst the body of literature focused on racism experienced by British Jews is well established, sport does not generally figure very prominently as an area of study. Renowned works by Colin Holmes, Gisela Lebzelter and Tony Kushner – as well as the recently published analysis of English anti-Semitism by Anthony Julius – have

[1] *Jewish Chronicle*, 18 March 1960, 25 March 1960, 1 April 1960, 8 April 1960. The newspaper was seemingly spurred into launching its investigation into golfing anti-Semitism by revelations about racism in the sport which surfaced during at a conference convened in January 1960 by the National Council of Civil Liberties on the theme of 'Anti-Semitism and Racial Incitement'.

demonstrated that anti-Semitism has been present in Britain in many guises (overt/covert, organised/social, political/popular) and in many different time periods (from Medieval 'blood libels' to contemporary 'Anti-Zionism'). Whilst sport has not been completely overlooked within these histories, it is fair to say that attention has often focused on anti-Semitism within British politics, culture and society, rather than in the world of British leisure. [2]

In reality, anti-Semitism has been both powerful and widespread within British sport across modern times. For instance, the career of the famous Regency–era pugilist, Daniel Mendoza, was apparently blighted by the anti-Semitic attitude of a significant section of the British boxing 'fancy'.[3] Since the age of Eastern European Jewish migration to Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, growing Jewish interest in sport has been accompanied by anti-Semitism and discrimination in various guises – be it in the attitude of non-Jewish football supporters to Jewish spectators or in the propaganda of the British Union of Fascists.[4] Importantly, as this migrant community experienced social and geographic mobility from the interwar period onwards, they also encountered latent hostility in a number of 'middle-class' sports within Britain. The experiences of Angela Buxton – Wimbledon Ladies Doubles champion in 1956 – would be typical for most Jews playing tennis during the mid-twentieth century.[5] Likewise, Jews interested in squash and badminton also found

[2] Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism is British Society: 1876-1939* (London, 1979); Gisela Lebzelter, *Political Anti-Semitism in England: 1918-1939* (London, 1978); Anthony Kushner, *Persistence of Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in British Society during the Second World War* (Manchester, 1989); Anthony Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England* (Oxford, 2010).

[3] Randy Roberts, 'Eighteenth Century Boxing', *Journal of Sport History*, 4, 3 (1977), 254-5.

[4] See David Dee, 'Jews and British Sport: Integration, Ethnicity and anti-Semitism, c1880-c1960', PhD thesis, De Montfort University, Leicester, 2011.

[5] Buxton battled against anti-Semitism throughout her career, being frequently turned down for club membership, or encountering problems in competition, on account of her Jewishness. See Bruce

themselves summarily excluded or banned by private clubs on account of their ethnicity.[6]

Within British golf, anti-Semitism has been particularly powerful and widespread. Jewish interest in the sport - referred to as '*the* elite game for the urban middle classes' – emerged in the late nineteenth century as a number of courses were opened in suburban locations.[7] These courses, as opposed to the large number of coastal 'links', were much more accessible for the predominantly urban Jewish population of Britain.[8] During the 1900s, adverts for golfing holidays and equipment suppliers became commonplace in the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle* – which in 1912 declared that an 'ever-increasing' number of Jews had taken up the sport since the turn of the century.[9] It was at this time that a number of prominent English Jews, such as Albert Goldsmid and Sir Edward Sassoon, became well known within British

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Schoenfeld, *The Match: Althea Gibson and Angela Buxton: How Two Outsiders – One Black, the Other Jewish – Forged a Friendship and made Sports History* (New York, 2004). Similarly, in Manchester, the Waterpark Club was founded after a local businessman's daughters had been refused entry to the Prestwich Tennis Club. Waterpark went on to become an important centre for sport and leisure for Manchester's Jewish youth. Bill Williams, *Jewish Manchester: An Illustrated History* (Derby, 2008), 138-9; *Jewish Chronicle*, 25 February 1927.

[6] See, for example, the Sunderland Jewish Badminton Club, which was founded in 1954 due to anti-Semitism in local clubs. Tyne and Wear Archive Services (TWAS), Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, Minutes of the Sunderland Jewish Badminton Club, SX113/1, Constitution (1954). Similarly, Jews in Birmingham playing squash in the 1950s were forced to create their own club, The Wingate Club, because they could not gain entry to local clubs because of their Jewishness. Correspondence of author with Michael Leek, 8 August 2009.

[7] John Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes: 1870-1914* (Manchester, 1993), 130.

[8] Geoffrey Cousins, *Golf in Britain: A Social History from the Beginnings to the Present Day* (London, 1975), 139.

[9] *Jewish Chronicle*, 4 June 1905, 10 July 1908, 26 July 1912.

golfing circles.[10] In 1908, EA Lassen, an Old Rugbeian and merchant trader from Bradford, won the coveted British Amateur Championship at Royal Sandwich.[11]

Whilst 'Anglicised' Jews such as these were welcomed into the golfing establishment, many within the rank-and-file of the Jewish community faced considerable anti-Semitism.[12] Although British golf is traditionally seen as having an exclusive attitude towards participation – as evidenced by the prejudice directed at both artisan and female golfers at various times in the sport's history – it has been suggested that anti-Semitism is one of the 'most powerful' strands of discrimination.[13] In a reflection of the United States and Australia, where Jews interested in golf also experienced considerable anti-Semitism, British Jews faced discrimination from the golfing press, the golfing establishment and, most importantly, private clubs.[14] Anti-Semitism within British golf was not only present across a long time period and geographically widespread (affecting every sizeable Jewish community in Great Britain), but also originated from individuals and organisations at all levels of the

[10] For Goldsmid (1846-1904), career officer in the British Army and founder of the Jewish Lads' Brigade, see *Jewish Chronicle*, 9 October 1903. For Sassoon (1856-1912), renowned businessmen, politician and, subsequently, Captain of Folkestone Golf Club, see *Golf Illustrated*, 10 July 1908.

[11] *Golf Illustrated*, 12 June 1908, 19 June 1908; *The Times*, 30 May 1908; *Bradford Daily Argus,* 29 May 1908, 3 June 1908.

[12] Cousins noted in 1975 that the Royal and Ancient, the traditional governing body of the sport, 'has several Jewish members', whilst both the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society also had several members throughout their history. Cousins, *Golf*, 142.

[13] Lowerson, *Sport*, 22. For prejudice within the sport towards female golfers, see Jane George, "An Excellent Means of Combining Fresh Air, Exercise and Society': Females on the Fairways, 1890-1914', *Sport in History*, 29, 3 (2009), 333-53.

[14] Levine has shown that during the 1920s and 1930s many Jewish immigrants found their entry into American golf clubs blocked due to their religious background. Peter Levine, "'Our Crowd at Play" The Elite Jewish Country Club in the 1920s' in Steven Riess (ed.), *Sports and the American Jew* (New York, 1998), 162-8. Likewise, Tatz has highlighted that similarly anti-Semitic membership policies were adopted by Australian golf clubs in the period from the early twentieth century through to the 1950s. Colin Tatz, *A Course of History: Monash Country Club: 1931-2001* (Sydney, 2002), 28.

sport. Throughout large parts of the twentieth century, Jewish golfers faced a significant level of hostility, driven by crude stereotypes, snobbery, ignorance and a basic fear of the 'other', due to their religious background.

Golfing racism was both powerful and widespread within Britain, yet Jews did not simply accept the hostility they faced and cease playing the sport. Whilst this article will illustrate and analyse anti-Semitism within British golf, it will also highlight the response to discrimination taken by Jewish communities – large and small – across the country. Unwilling to allow anti-Semitism to prevent their enjoyment of the sport and access to the social and business opportunities it also offered, Jewish golfers strove to create their own clubs and courses. Symbolically, these 'Jewish' organisations remained open to all golfers, regardless or race or creed. By opening their own clubs and pursuing an 'integrationist' membership policy, Jews not only protected their own sporting interests in the face of a non-organised form of anti-Semitism, but also provided a retort to golfing bigotry and racism.

Effectively, the discrimination against Jewish golfers led to the separate development of Jewish golf within Britain and the creation of 'parallel institutions'.[15] What was created within golf, and to a lesser extent within other middle-class sports, during the period from the 1920s to the 1970s was a form of sporting racial segregation. As one correspondent to the *Jewish Chronicle* noted in 1960, what had been effectively constructed within the sport was a type of 'Jewish apartheid' – with

[15] This term has been used to describe the situation seen in modern Europe and America, where Jews who faced anti-Semitism in a wide variety of social and sporting clubs simply founded their own organisations. See George Eisen, 'Jewish History and the Ideology of Modern Sport: Approaches and Interpretations', *Journal of Sport History*, 25, 3 (1998), 507; George Eisen, 'Jews and Sport: A Century of Retrospect', *Journal of Sport History*, 26, 2 (1999), 236.

anti-Semitism forcing many Jews to play the sport in separate facilities away from their non-Jewish peers.[16]

This case study highlights an aspect of life in 'middle' England where Jews were prevented from engaging more fully with the majority due to discrimination and bigotry. The work of a number of scholars of Anglo-Jewry has shown us that many socially and economically mobile Jews faced a 'social' form of anti-Semitism which impacted significantly on their social, educational and occupational lives. An analysis of golf, however, demonstrates that this kind of discrimination against Jews clearly extended to the world of sport - a sphere of life where sections of the non-Jewish community were vehemently racist in the face of an 'invasion' by a foreign, alien element.

'Flashy' Jews? Anti-Semitism in British Golf

As early as the 1890s, Jews interested in joining local golf clubs encountered considerable anti-Semitism. In the May 1894 issue of *Golf* (a weekly magazine absorbed into *Golf Illustrated* in 1899), a letter was published entitled 'The Exclusion of Jews from Golf Clubs'. 'Fair Play', a regular correspondence to the magazine, asked 'Sir, I am sure it would be interesting to know what the golfing fraternity thinks of a Manchester Golf Club that excludes all Jews from membership'. The author believed that this was an affront to Jews in the local area. He noted his surprise at the discrimination against Jewish golfers when 'the trustees of a Jew (the late David Lewis [a leading retail pioneer in the late nineteenth century]) have last week

[16] *Jewish Chronicle*, 8 April 1960.

presented £70,000 to the Manchester Southern Hospital'. No further discussion of the letter was published in the newspaper.[17]

Similar accounts of discrimination against Jewish golfers also emerged elsewhere in the golfing press during the pre-1914 period. In February 1911, a letter concerning the 'qualification for membership of a golf club' was published in *Golf Illustrated*, a newspaper founded in 1899 containing news on the 'Royal and Ancient game'. The letter, which detailed one Jewish golfer's attempts to become a member of a 'club not nearly so high in the golfing firmament', was written by a regular correspondent to the newspaper named 'Truth'. He noted that

> I am told what this club was. He [*Truth's* Jewish friend] was asked to withdraw his name and for no other reason, so far as he can gather, save that the candidate was of the Jewish persuasion. I have no doubt that the nominee did not lose socially by his failure to join such a club. Christianity supplies plenty of bounders. And these Christian men, whilst thanking themselves that they are as not as other men, probably forgot that if there had been no Jews there would be no Christians.[18]

Despite the correspondent's concern, *Golf Illustrated* often itself demonstrated a 'casually virulent' form of anti-Semitism towards Jewish golfers in the period before the First World War.[19] At a time when increasing numbers of Jews were being drawn to the sport, the newspaper began to publish a series of cartoons and fictional stories

[17] *Golf*, 11 May 1894.

[18] *Golf Illustrated,* 17 February 1911.

[19] Tony Collins, 'Jews, Anti-Semitism and Sports in Britain, 1900-1939', in Michael Brenner and Gideon Reuvani (eds), *Emancipation Through Muscles: Jews and Sports in Europe*, (London, 2006), 147.

depicting Jewish players as foreign, 'flashy' and unsporting. The first cartoon [see figure one] was printed in 1910 and touched on notions of Jewish 'mistrust' by depicting two Jewish golfers named 'Ikey Junior' and 'Ikey Senior' talking in broken English.[20] The last cartoon [see figure two] was published in October 1912, a large imposing front-cover image of a swarthy, rotund Jewish golfer wearing a fur-lined coat and a large piece of jewellery around his neck. The golfer's clubs were dwarfed by the man's frame. This insinuated, together with the passive nature of his face and his pound-sign emblazoned cap, a lack of sporting interest on his part, whilst also alluding to popular stereotypes concerning Jewish money 'obsession' and 'ostentatious' behaviour.[21]

The cartoons were aimed at underlining the physical and psychological difference of the 'stereotyped' Jewish immigrant golfer. Here was a 'sportsman' whose appearance and personal conception of British sport were distinctly 'foreign' and at odds with the British enthusiast. The visual message of the cartoons was reinforced by sporadic written pieces about fictional Jewish golfers. These short written sketches depicted Jews as being overly competitive and 'un-sportsmanlike'. They also alluded to ideas about a Jewish 'win-at-all-costs' sporting mentality – a mentality which supposedly characterised their dealings in the fields of business and trade.[22]

[FIGURE 1 Here]

[20] *Golf Illustrated*, 4 February 1910.

[21] Ibid. 25 October 1912. For other anti-Semitic cartoons see, *Golf Illustrated*, 11 February 1910, 15 April 1910, 6 May 1910.

[22] Holmes, *Anti-Semitism,*19-21.

These articles worked to emphasise the notion that the Jewish attitude was completely 'alien' to the prevailing British sporting ethos of the time. Whereas a British golfer played for the love and enjoyment of the game, the Jew could not apparently contain his inbuilt desire to win – whether or not this victory came through fair or foul means. For example, in a 1910 article entitled 'A Keen Match', an account of a fictional game between two Jews – who both spoke in broken English - named 'Isaacs' and 'Levy' was published:

> They were looking for a ball in the rough:
>
> ISAACS (suddenly finding one): Vat pall are you playing Levy?
>
> LEVY: Vat is dat?
>
> ISAACS: A Colonel.
>
> LEVY: Dat is so! It is a Colonel I blay!
>
> ISAACS (affecting closer scrutiny of the ball): Sorry ole shap, put I see dis is a Shallenger!
>
> LEVY: Ah, of course, I remember now – I but down a Shallenger at de last dee, tidn't I poy?!
>
> CADDY: Yus
>
> LEVY: Now den Isaacs!
>
> ISAACS (again looking at the ball): But I mistake. Dis is a Craigbank, so I keep him.
>
> PLAYER (hurrying up from the other side of the hedge): Excuse me, Sir, but I think that is my ball. I pulled horribly from the seventh. It's a Kite with a purple mark – yes, that's it! Thanks very much!
>
> LEVY: Dat done you one Isaacs!

ISAACS (looking at his watch): As ofer fife minutes ‘ave gone since you bekun de ‘unt I claim de ‘ole. Cheer up old poy!

LEVY (to his caddy): When he get in de rough, shust leaf ‘im alone and time him to de segund. ‘Ere is my cold vatch – you ear poy?

CADDY: Yus.[23]

Similar ideas were also present a week later. A small piece about a fictional character named ‘Isaacstein’ claimed that the Jewish golfer often took two clubs to measure penalty shots, one short one for his opponents and one long one for himself, in order to gain an advantage.[24]

[FIGURE 2 here]

Whilst anti-Semitism in the golfing press disappears from 1912 onwards, discrimination against Jews by golf clubs became much more prevalent after the First World War.[25] The growth of this form of racism is linked with socio-economic change occurring within Anglo-Jewry from this point onwards. During the interwar years, greater numbers of second and third generation Jews left the original urban areas of immigrant settlement and experienced considerable ‘residential and economic mobility’.[26] Similarly, in the period following the Second World War, Anglo-Jewry

[23] *Golf Illustrated*, 2 September 1910.

[24] Ibid. 9 September 1910.

[25] This isn’t to say that anti-Semitism of this nature disappeared from the press entirely. In 1924, the *Daily Mirror* ran an article entitled ‘The Winning Hazard’, documenting a fictional match play game between two golfers named ‘Abrahams’ and ‘Cohen’ which the latter had won by tricking his opponent into forfeiting the match. *Daily Mirror*, 9 July 1924.

[26] Todd Endelman, *The Jews of Britain: 1656-2000* (London, 2002), 198-201.

became much more dispersed across Britain. From the late 1940s, 'suburbanisation…accelerated' as a result of evacuation, destruction caused by the War, the expansion of secondary and tertiary education and a general increase in affluence. As is reflected with other Western Jewish populations, from 1945 onwards, Anglo-Jewry became increasingly 'middle-class in character'.[27]

Scholars of British anti-Semitism have noted that there is a strong link between the changing socio-economic profile of Anglo-Jewry and increasing racial discrimination. As Kushner has noted, 'increasing Jewish mobility' in the period after 1918 meant that 'contact with the non-Jewish world could no longer be avoided', with the result being that these Jews met increasing levels of 'hostility' from the wider community.[28] Whilst Jews faced discrimination from the indigenous working classes, it could be argued that 'the most serious anti-Semitism was located amongst the lower middle-classes'.[29]

The reaction of this section of British society to what they saw as a Jewish 'invasion' was 'defamation', 'whispering', 'sniggering' and occupational, educational and social discrimination in a variety of different environments.[30] For example, openly discriminatory job adverts against Jews were regularly placed in the pages of 'respectable newspapers' during the 1920s and 1930s, whilst Jews also 'faced discrimination from estate agents and hostility from neighbours' when moving house. There are numerous examples of Jews being banned from restaurants, hotels and

[27] Ernest Krausz, 'The Economic and Social Structure of Anglo-Jewry' in Julius Gould and Saul Esh (eds), *Jewish Life in Modern Britain* (London, 1964), 31.

[28] Tony Kushner, 'British Anti-Semitism, 1918-1945' in David Cesarani (ed.), *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry* (Oxford,1990), 200-1.

[29] Kushner, *Persistence*, 96. For working-class anti-Semitism see Todd Endelman, *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History* (Indiana [USA], 1990), 193.

[30] Endelman, *The Jews*, 199.

boarding houses at this time, whilst several colleges and public schools introduced quotas for Jewish pupils. Jews were also refused insurance policies due to their apparently 'high-risk' status and also found 'formal and informal barriers' in place when trying to enter the 'various professions'.[31] As Endelman has noted, 'whilst this kind of racism was not systematic…it was common enough that few Jews could have avoided it altogether or been unaware of its existence'.[32]

Part of this broader trend for middle-class 'social' anti-Semitism is evident within golf - a sport closely connected to this social class within Britain. From the 1920s through to the 1960s, many socially mobile Jews faced a powerful and prevalent form of racism from golf clubs, especially when seeking membership of these organisations. Whilst not all clubs banned Jewish applicants, evidence suggests that a wide variety of methods of discrimination were used by many organisations.[33] A diverse mix of reasons were given for excluding and attacking the Jewish golfer – many of which drew inspiration from traditional stereotypes surrounding the Jewish population and an irrational belief in the un-sporting nature of the Jewish immigrant.

On occasion, some organisations freely admitted that they discriminated against Jewish golfers in membership applications. In the 'exhaustive investigation' undertook by the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1960, it was demonstrated that Jewish golfers

[31] See, for example, Kushner, 'British Anti-Semitism', 200-1; Holmes, *Anti-Semitism*, 204; Lebzelter, *Political Anti-Semitism*, 32-3.

[32] Endelman, *The Jews*, 199.

[33] See, for instance, Richard Holt, 'Golf and the English Suburb: Class and Gender in a London Club, c1890-c1960', *The Sports Historian*, 18, 1 (1998), 82. Holt notes that in 1950 the Club Captain of the Stanmore Golf Club, located in North London, minuted his opinion that 'a candidate shall not be refused election merely because of his Race'. Holt concedes, however, that the 'reason for widening access seems to have less to do with changing social attitudes after the horrors of Nazism than the immediate financial needs of the Club'. He claimed that the Captain's statement demonstrated the club's need for new membership after the Second World War led to a considerable drop in the number on the organisation's rolls. Endelman, *The Jews*, 198-201.

across Britain were experiencing unconcealed discrimination and racism on a frequent basis when attempting to join private clubs.[34] One Jewish golfer in Manchester claimed he was openly told by one club that 'it is a tradition that no Jews are accepted'.[35] In the same year, the *Hendon Times* interviewed a German Jewish golfer who had been refused membership by a number of local golf clubs because of his religion. The golfer, who claimed he had failed in applications to ten different clubs over a three year period, noted that 'one Secretary had the audacity to agree with me that if I had been a German Gentile I would have been admitted'.[36]

Although it is clear that some organisations adopted openly anti-Semitic membership policies, most clubs used much more concealed means for preventing Jews from joining. One of the most common selection methods used by 'private' institutions was the 'blackball' system – a method of election using a ballot which allowed individuals to voice their concern, anonymously, over the suitability of potential members and veto their membership. There are numerous examples where Jewish golfers suffered from the 'blackball' system. This is true even when the clubs they were applying to already had a number of Jewish members. In 1948, two Jewish golfers applied for membership of one golf club on Merseyside and were subsequently blackballed.[37] Similarly, in the 1950s, Michael Leek, an ex-officer in the British Army during World War Two, sought membership at a club in Worcestershire, where his father and uncles were long standing members and financial donors. Despite his suitability for membership, Michael's application was initially rejected

[34] *Jewish Chronicle*, 8 April 1960.

[35] Ibid. 18 March 1960.

[36] *Hendon Times*, 1 April 1960.

[37] Geoff Swift, *'Are You Made Up?' The Story of a Golf Club: Lee Park Golf Club, 1954-2004* (Liverpool, 2004), 4.

due to a single 'blackball' - for no other apparent reason than his religious background:

> When I came out of the army, he [Michael's father Eric] wanted me to join North Worcester, so I went up and was interviewed by them. In those days, clubs used to operate a secret blackball system. I was blackballed. Just come out of the army, I was a fine, upstanding, public school lieutenant in the army and I was blackballed. Why? Because I was Jewish, although he [Eric Leek] had been in the club for years. He kicked up a hell of a fuss about it and eventually they found out who it was who blackballed me and he was asked to resign from the club and eventually I became a member.[38]

Whilst the 'blackball' system prevented many Jews from joining local clubs, it was not uncommon for a formal quota system to be used for Jewish members. On occasion, such quotas were freely admitted and discussed, but for the large part they were kept secret from potential Jewish members. In 1960, the *Hendon Times* discovered that anti-Semitic membership policies were relatively widespread at a number of golf clubs in the north London area. Spurred on by their interview with a German-Jewish golfer, the newspaper launched its own investigation into golfing anti-Semitism and found that quota systems were in widespread use. At the Finchley Golf Club it was claimed that there was an 'unwritten rule' that only a few Jews could be admitted. When questioned by the reporter, the Hendon Golf Club freely

[38] Interview with author, 29 July 2009

acknowledged a quota system was in place for Jewish golfers: 'we do accept them, but only in certain numbers'.[39]

Further evidence of quota systems being used with regards to Jewish golfers emerged earlier in the same year. At a conference concerning 'Anti-Semitism and Racial Incitement' held in March 1960, one speaker, the Bishop of Southwark, Dr Mervin Stockwood (1913-1995), claimed that he had received evidence to indicate that quota systems were in use at a number of clubs in and around Greater London. He recounted a letter he had received from Mr Moss Kaye, a Jewish golfer from Edgware, who claimed he had approached the Bushey Hall Golf Club in Hertfordshire after seeing a notice in the club asking for new members, but was told 'sorry, we have a quota for Jews and it is full'.[40] Similar sentiments towards female Jewish golfers were also uncovered with regards to Hendon Golf Club and Highgate Golf Club in North London. On applying to one club, a female Jewish golfer was 'told by the Secretary that if Jews were accepted there would be no room for ordinary people'.[41]

Generally, it was often the case that a wall of silence was encountered by Jews applying to local clubs. This common scenario can be seen by again referring to the experiences of the German-Jewish golfer recounted in the *Hendon Times* in 1960. In the article, the golfer discussed his experiences when applying for membership at the Mill Hill Golf Club in North London. After meeting the committee on two separate occasions, and speaking to the club captain on the matter, the golfer heard no more concerning his application. Despite writing to the club twice in the following months,

[39] *The Hendon Times*, 1 April 1960. It was noted in the *Jewish Chronicle* that Hendon had a 5 per cent cap on Jewish members. *Jewish Chronicle*, 4 March 1960.

[40] *Jewish Chronicle*, 4 March 1960.

[41] Ibid. 18 March 1960; Cousins, *Golf*, 140.

the golfer received no reply. Similar situations occurred when the golfer applied to clubs in the Rickmansworth, Highgate and Pinner areas.[42]

This situation is also reflected in the experiences of golfers in provincial Jewish communities. In the 1930s, Sydney Lea – born in Manchester to Russian Jewish migrants in 1902 - was encouraged by his two non-Jewish friends to apply for membership at the Heaton Park Golf Club, Manchester. Despite Sydney's reservations - aware of the situation facing Jewish golfers around the country, he said 'they won't have me, I'm Jewish' - he applied and was seconded by his friends. Several months went by without hearing from the club, until a chance meeting with the captain led one of Sydney's friends to raise the matter:

> So the Captain came along and we were all stood there talking, the three of us, the two Whittaker brothers, and he called them. Tom Whittaker said 'What's this? You've not let Syd know, he's not had his card to join the club'. So he looked at me, this Captain, and said 'Why don't you join the Whitefield Club [a Jewish golf club founded in Manchester in 1932]?' I said 'Do you want a smack in the eye, coz you'll bloody well get it!' So Whittaker the younger one said 'Why ain't you let him know, what you telling him to join another club for? He wants to join here, we're friends'. So the Captain said 'Well, I've not heard from the Committee', I said 'You know quite well what it is, it's because I'm Jewish, they wont take it'.

[42] *Hendon Times*, 1 April 1960.

Sydney's friends later challenged the Committee on the matter and received no reply. Subsequently, they surrendered their membership to the club in protest at the treatment of their Jewish friend.[43]

Most clubs would vehemently defend their right to prevent 'undesirable' applicants from being granted membership. As private institutions, clubs claimed that they could refuse any potential member if they felt they would be potentially damaging to their affairs or reputation. This view was supported by the golfing authorities of the time, as evidenced by correspondence between the Council of Christians and Jews and the English Golf Union in 1954. In that year the Council contacted the EGU to protest at reports of anti-Semitism in a club in Blackpool. The Union was implored to do more to combat anti-Semitism, but replied with a curt and dismissive response which stated that the Union would not 'interfere' with the private affairs of affiliated clubs:

> The Union does not assume any moral obligation of the sort you propose as this would involve intrusion into the domestic concerns of the private clubs, many of which are largely social institutions which conduct their affairs much along the lines of other social clubs.[44]

Prominent members of the Union were similarly dismissive of accusations of anti-Semitism. When challenged on the subject by the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1960, the Captain of the EGU, WGL Folkard, claimed he knew nothing of discrimination

[43] Manchester Jewish Museum (MJM), Manchester, Oral History Collection, J309, Interview with Sydney Lea (date unknown).

[44] The Jewish Archives (AJA), University of Southampton Special Collections, Archives of the Council of Christians and Jews, MS65, Correspondence between Council of Christians and Jews and the English Golf Union (23 June 1954, 27 July 1954, 23 September 1954).

towards Jews in golf, but defended a club's right to ban Jews by noting 'a golf club is the extension of one's own home, the election of new members is a purely domestic matter'.[45]

Due to the secrecy surrounding the application process it is difficult to directly assess the reasons and motivations underpinning this form of anti-Semitism. Evidently, a basic xenophobic and racist fear of 'outsiders' was prominent. Yet the discrimination was also seemingly driven by more specific stereotypical beliefs. In many instances, well-established, popular racist viewpoints of Jews influenced and informed the decisions of private golf clubs to block, or limit, Jewish members. Many of these beliefs were speculative and narrow-minded and the 'threat' that Jewish golfers posed to both the sporting and social element of golf was often irrationally overemphasised. Much focused on the idea that Jews were markedly different in their outlook, attitude and demeanour. Clubs supposedly felt the need to discriminate against them in order to prevent the nature of the sport being undermined and harmed both on and off the course.[46]

One charge often levelled against Jewish golfers, and frequently highlighted to explain their discrimination by clubs, focused upon their supposed 'clannishness'. It was argued that allowing one Jewish golfer in, or letting current Jewish members freely elect more of their 'own kind', was potentially dangerous for the club - which would soon be 'overrun' and changed out of all recognition. In 1923, the *Yorkshire Post* defended golf clubs in its locality against allegations of anti-Semitism in the *Jewish Chronicle*.[47] Whilst admitting that Jews had experienced difficulties in gaining

[45] *Jewish Chronicle*, 1 April 1960.

[46] Cousins, *Golf*, 140.

[47] For the article on anti-Semitism in golf clubs in Leeds see *Jewish Chronicle*, 13 April 1923.

membership at local clubs, the article felt it was 'absurd' to claim that this was because of anti-Semitism, before going on to say:

> Like other people, the Jew suffers from the defects of his virtues. One of these virtues is 'clannishness' or perhaps a more polite way to put it would be to say that he is intensely loyal to his own folk. When a Jew joins a golf club, he wants all his family and friends to share his pleasure. Consequently, one sees happy family parties wandering around the links, following the matches of their relatives – a delectable enough thing in itself, but when the persons composing this party have no idea of the established usage of the game, it is rather apt to be irritating to the serious minded British golfer…It is for definite, distinct and practical reasons such as these that the Jews have not become popular in golf clubs.[48]

Jewish golfers themselves often believed that it was this irrational fear of being 'overrun' that partly accounted for the discrimination they experienced. Sol Bennett, playing on Merseyside in the 1940s and 1950s, believed that clubs would purposely limit Jewish numbers 'as they were frightened that we might take over the club'.[49] In Glasgow, Jewish golfers freely admitted that they believed local clubs were concerned they would be 'swamped' by Jews if they didn't practice anti-Semitic membership policies. One Jewish golfer in Glasgow in the post-World War Two period claimed that this was a 'big fear of non-Jews. There is a fear that once they see Jews in

[48] Quoted in Ted Hyman, *A History of Moor Allerton Golf Club* (Moor Allerton, 2001), 7.

[49] Swift, *'Are You Made Up?'*, 4.

numbers, they are going to come in with an alien culture… Non-Jewish clubs are frightened that the Jews will take over'.[50]

Some organisations argued that they limited the number of Jews to prevent their inherently 'foreign' nature from changing the atmosphere of their club. Such a belief is evidenced in the work of historian Geoffrey Cousins, who claimed that Jewish golfers had 'tastes' that were not conducive to a club's desire to keep costs and expense down. Additionally, he claimed that because 'the Jew is deeply interested in administration and finance' he would not be able to resist the urge to interfere in the business side of the club.[51] Cousins also suggested that the average club member often had pragmatic, yet still inherently racist, concerns about Jewish golfers. They feared that allowing Jews who were 'flashy' in their tastes and poor patrons of the bar to join their clubs in high numbers would lead to higher membership fees to cover the shortfall. Similar ideas were uncovered by the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1960. Its investigations found that the 'fear' of higher subscriptions due to apparently 'modest' Jewish drinking habits was common and helped to explain the anti-Semitism faced by Jewish golfers when applying for membership at private clubs.[52]

Jews were also discriminated against because of their supposed inability to play and understand the game in anything but an 'alien' manner – a notion which had been prevalent in *Golf Illustrated* before 1914. Although rarely going into specific details, many clubs claimed that the 'unsatisfactory behaviour on the golf course' of Jewish golfers was another reason for their apprehension to admit Jews more freely. Clubs feared that their reputation could be damaged by Jews who did not understand the finer nuances of golfing etiquette. For instance, the 1923 *Yorkshire Post* article about

[50] Scottish Jewish Archives (SJAC), Glasgow, Interview with Philip Jacobson (11 May 1989).

[51] Cousins, *Golf*. 140.

[52] *Jewish Chronicle*, 25 March 1960

anti-Semitism in local clubs claimed that as 'golf to the Jew is a new game…he has not yet acquired the appreciation of the game that comes instinctively to the ordinary Britisher'. The allegation was that whilst Jews might be able to play the game, they failed to approach it in the right spirit or in the correct 'sporting' manner.[53]

'Jewish apartheid': The Jewish Response to Anti-Semitism in Golf

Evidently, Jewish golfers faced considerable hostility from the golfing press, establishment and individual golf clubs. This had the effect of limiting these golfers' ability to become members of many clubs and restricted their opportunities to play the sport in the same manner as their non-Jewish peers. As appeals to the golfing authorities had proved ineffective, and because many Jewish golfers themselves believed it fruitless and 'bad form' to question a club's decision about membership, they were forced to find alternative ways to play the sport – resulting in the formation of several Jewish touring societies and golf clubs.[54] In doing this, Jewish golfers in Britain mirrored a 'process' followed by Jews elsewhere in Western society who had been excluded from social and sporting organisations. As Eisen has noted, it was common for Jews in Central Europe, America and Australia from the late nineteenth century onwards to form 'parallel institutions as a response to blatant discrimination and exclusionary policies' within non-Jewish organisations. Evidently, the decision of

[53] Quoted in Hyman, *A History of Moor Allerton*, 7. Despite this 'evidence', there seemed to be little truth in the suggestion that Jewish golfers were 'un-sporting' in their golfing behaviour. One professional golfer commented to the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1960 that 'his travels throughout numerous golf clubs had left him of the opinion that Jews were keener members than non-Jews and that they knew more about golfing etiquette'. *Jewish Chronicle*, 25 March 1960

[54] *Jewish Chronicle*, 1 April 1960.

British Jews to form their own organisations in golf, and other middle class sports, was not a trend noticeable only within British Jewry. [55]

The first Jewish golf club to open in Britain was the Moor Allerton Golf Club in Yorkshire in 1923. The course, and accompanying facilities for tennis, was built on farm land near the town of Alwoodley, north of Leeds, with funds raised from the local Jewish community. Communal and lay leaders of Leeds Jewry, as well as numerous prominent Jewish business leaders, were all represented amongst the 170 original shareholders.[56] The motivation of this group to create their own golf club was clearly driven by anti-Semitism and discrimination experienced by local Jewish golfers in the early twentieth century. The 'guiding spirit and inspiration' for forming the club, local cloth merchant and first Chairman of Moor Allerton, Abraham Frais, had himself experienced discrimination at the Garforth Golf Club in the pre-First World War period. In 1922, Frais brought many members of Leeds Jewry together to raise the idea of forming a Jewish course. One account of that meeting noted:

> He could see young boys and girls growing up into men and women with no opportunity or outlet for healthy recreation and owing to circumstances which we all well knew, the chances of so many of our Community being banned from golf courses and tennis courts was becoming more than apparent. With fervour, he expressed his views that we had a duty to the next generation to see that this matter was dealt with immediately.[57]

[55] Eisen, 'Jews and Sport', 236.

[56] Hyman, *A History of Moor Allerton*, 16. Contemporary reports suggested that the first ever 'Jewish' golf club was founded in 1916 in Quaker Ridge, New York, United States of America.

[57] Ibid. 14.

The club, which also had a thriving tennis section, had 150 playing members by 1937 - a figure which had expanded to 650 by the time of the 1958 AGM.[58]

The second Jewish golf club to open was the Whitefield Club, founded in North Manchester in October 1932. Like Moor Allerton, the course and clubhouse at Whitefield was built with the assistance and finances of the wider Manchester Jewish community. The German-Jewish Cassel family, who had made their fortune through construction in the North-West, were pivotal in bringing together a group of Jewish businessmen to raise money to secure the lease of the land for the course in June 1932. The first nine-holes of the course were formally opened on 30 October 1932, with the other nine finished by June 1933.[59]

Like its counterpart in Yorkshire, the formation of Whitefield was firmly driven by anti-Semitism. The desire of a section of Manchester Jewry's golfing community to play their sport in a friendly atmosphere was key in the formation of the club.[60] In 1936, the *Jewish Chronicle* printed an article entitled 'The Whitefield Club: Its Genesis and Progress', which noted:

> Some years ago many reputable and substantial members of the Jewish community found their applications for membership of certain clubs turned down – solely on account of their being Jews. Fortified rather than mortified by their experience, a number of these gentlemen met to discover ways and

[58] Ibid. 33, 47.

[59] Williams, *Jewish Manchester*, 138; Jewish *Chronicle*, 17 January 1936.

[60] See Ernest Schlesinger, *Creating Community and Accumulating Social Capital: Jews Associating with other Jews in Manchester* (London, 2003).

means of founding a golf club which Jews could join and be proud of, and in which the spirit of sportsmanship in the best sense would be paramount.[61]

In smaller provincial Jewish communities, the situation was slightly different. It was often the case that Jewish golfing societies would be formed in order to help local Jews play together and avoid the anti-Semitism and persecution often faced when trying to join private clubs. In 1931, a golf section was formed at the Glasgow Jewish Institute and was followed by societies in Merseyside (1948), Birmingham (1949), Southport (1950), Sheffield (1951), Belfast (1951), Sussex (1952), the North-East (1953), Nottingham (1959) and Blackpool (1963). These groups, which could range from a dozen up to over 100 members, played as touring private societies at local clubs and local municipal courses. Society days, an important source of income for golf clubs, were open to Jewish organisations because they could be hosted without any permanent attachment to the club being created. Regular competitions would be held both within and between individual Jewish societies on a regular basis, meaning that a network of Jewish golfers was built up across the country.[62]

Over time, some of the larger societies began to realise that this kind of arrangement was untenable in the long term. As many of these groups grew larger, the idea of raising funds to build or purchase their own clubs became more and more popular. The Glasgow Jewish Institute's golf section, for instance, grew so rapidly during its first five years that the need for privately-controlled golfing facilities quickly became apparent. In 1956, the opportunity to purchase a club south of

[61] *Jewish Chronicle*, 17 January 1936. By the end of its first year, Whitefield had a total of 406 members, growing to over 800 during the 1950s. Schlesinger, *Creating Community*.

[62] Hyman, *A History of Moor Allerton*, 112; SJAC, Bonnyton Golf Club History brochure: 1957-2007 (Glasgow, 2007), 3; TWAS, SX124/2/1, North-Eastern Jewish Golfing Society AGM Minutes (11 December 1967).

Glasgow arose and a 'prodigious effort' was made within Glasgow Jewry to raise the necessary finance. On 19 May 1957, the Bonnyton Moor Golf Club was formally re-opened with Jewish owners. The occasion was recounted in the Glasgow *Jewish Echo*, which claimed that over 700 people were in attendance and that the clubhouse was 'gaily bedecked for the occasion with Union Jacks and Blue and White flags'.[63]

Following the lead of Glasgow Jewry, Jewish golfing societies located elsewhere gradually became interested in the idea of buying or building their own clubs and having a permanent base. In 1953 the Merseyside Jewish Golfing Society collected together money in order to purchase a farm estate in Netherley. The result of this was that in May 1954 the first six holes of the Lee Park Golf Club were formally opened. The brochure announcing the purchase of the land and, outlining plans for the course, noted that 'the venture, when established, will provide for ourselves and our children a centre where we will be able to meet in an atmosphere entirely free from prejudice'. By 1959, club membership had grown to 428.[64]

A similar situation occurred in Birmingham. Within a year of the Birmingham Jewish Golfing Society's foundation in 1949 over 100 members had joined, including leading figures from Birmingham Jewry's religious, social and political elites. In September 1950, the idea of finding private facilities was first mooted and gained considerable support within the Society. In the space of one month over £10,000 was raised through the donations of members, yet the Society's leaders remained 'sensitive' both to the feelings of local non-Jewish golfers and to the potential reception they would receive if they purchased a 'going concern'. They feared that pursuing the option of buying an established club would cause 'resentment' within the

[63] SJAC, Bonnyton Golf Club History brochure: 1957-2007 (Glasgow, 2007), 2-5.

[64] Swift, *'Are you made up?'*, 3-6; Liverpool Record Office (LRO), Liverpool, Jewish Sports Clubs Archives, 296JSC/1/7/1, 'Brochure announcing some details of the new Lee Park Golf Club' (1954)

club with 'over 100 members of the Jewish faith suddenly descending on their golf course' and remained keen to purchase land and construct their own course from scratch. In May 1955, with the financial support of members, sections of Birmingham Jewry and several bank loans and overdrafts, the Society purchased the derelict Shirley Park racecourse,. Over the course of the next three years, £11,400 was spent on building the course and clubhouse. The first nine holes were opened in June 1958, with the homewards nine completed in November 1958.[65]

There were a variety of other means by which Jewish golfers could play the sport in a friendlier and more amenable club environment. In the Greater London area especially, small groups of Jewish golfers often either created clubs on an equal basis with Gentile partners or purchased and took over pre-existing clubs. With the Potters Bar Golf Club in North London, it was reported that a group of Jewish and non-Jewish businessmen came together in 1923 to build the club in order to provide a friendly atmosphere in which Jewish golfers could play. Although Potters Bar was created on an equal basis between Jewish and non-Jewish members, the former soon made up the majority - due to the anti-Semitism prevalent within many North London clubs. By the late 1930s over 85 per cent of the membership was Jewish.[66]

Although not founded by Jews, a number of other clubs in the Greater London region became the home for large numbers of Jewish golfers in the post-World War Two period. Both the Hartsbourne Country Club in Hertfordshire and the Coombe Hill Golf Club, based in Kingston-Upon-Thames, were not originally formed as Jewish clubs. Hartsbourne reportedly had a number of Jews as founder members, but it was not until the 1940s that it came to be regarded in wider golfing circles as a

[65] Interview with Michael Leek, 28 July 2009. Bill Hiscox, *Shirley Golf Club: The First 40 Years, 1955-1995* (Birmingham, 1995), 36-7.

[66] *Jewish Chronicle*, 19 November 1937.

'Jewish' club. Coombe Hill, however, was purchased by a group of Jewish golfers in 1946 that had been refused admission to other golf clubs in the Surrey region and wanted to play together in a friendly environment free of anti-Semitism.[67]

By the 1960s, a large network of 'parallel institutions' was created by the Jewish golfing community in order to allow them to play the sport in an environment free of anti-Semitism. By 1964 there were 11 'Jewish' clubs (either founded, purchased or frequented by groups of Jewish golfers) in existence across Great Britain, all of which were located within close proximity of the main Jewish communities and areas of Jewish secondary, suburban settlement. One conservative estimate, taking into account both the membership of clubs and societies, would put the number of Jewish golfers at somewhere between 4000-4500 in 1964. In order to assist with the administration of the large Jewish golfing network, and to arrange matches and competitions between the various organisations, the Association of Jewish Golf Clubs and Societies was formed in 1949.[68]

Symbolically, all Jewish institutions noted openly that golfers of any colour, race or religion were free to join. Whilst these clubs may have been built, purchased or run by Jews – many of whom had faced discrimination first-hand - they all made it clear to the wider public that membership was open to all. The first Jewish club, Moor Allerton, made a resolution to attract non-Jewish golfers from the outset and pledged that 'although its foundation was due to intolerance, membership would be open to all, irrespective of religion'. One source noted that Jewish clubs had a friendly reputation towards outsiders and visitors and applauded the fact that 'Jewish clubs welcome visitors without introduction and only one has a definite rule requiring

[67] Ibid. 25 March 1960

[68] Cousins, *Golf*, 142; *Jewish Chronicle*, 8 April 1960.

introduction by a member at all times'.[69] Similarly, Bonnyton Moor Golf Club was advertised as an 'open club…[with] no bar on the grounds of religion, race or colour'.[70]

The fact that Jewish clubs were keen to adopt a non-discriminatory stance was a significant retort to the bigotry and anti-Semitism encountered by Jewish golfers. However, it was also for practical and financial reasons, especially in clubs in the smaller provincial communities, that non-Jewish members were actively sought. The historian and former Captain of Shirley Golf Club in Solihull, William Hiscox, noted that part of the enthusiasm of the original Committee in seeking members outside of the Jewish faith was driven by practical considerations: 'The idea was to open the club to anyone…the Committee knew straight away that they needed new members and basically that they had to be non-Jewish because there weren't enough Jewish members at all to make it a viable project'. The Club's current President, Michael Leek, commented that Birmingham Jewry's relatively small size meant that it was inevitable and financially necessary to actively seek outside members.[71]

This initiative was very successful within the clubs, both in financial and sporting terms. At those Jewish clubs where non-Jews joined or visited in notable numbers, it was reported that there was a significant level of integration and friendliness. One report in the *Yorkshire Evening News* from 1931 claimed that Moor Allerton was 'one of the most popular of golfing resorts in the Leeds district' and that non-Jewish visitors to the club abounded, especially at weekends. The article noted that the draw of a course designed by a renowned architect, kept in excellent condition and easily accessible from Leeds was obvious. However, visitors were also

[69] Hyman, *A History of Moor Allerton*, 16; Cousins, *Golf*, 141.

[70] SJAC, Interview with Philip Jacobson (1989).

[71] Interview with William Hiscox, 28 July 2009; Interview with Michael Leek, 28 July 2009.

apparently attracted to the club for the whole-hearted and friendly welcome that they received from the Club committee and members.[72] Lee Park was often referred to locally as the 'friendly club', due to the hospitable welcome that visitors and guests received.[73] Similarly, Shirley Golf Club has prided itself throughout its history on the level of integration between Jewish and non-Jewish members; a notable number of whom joined the club during its very early days in existence.[74]

Despite significant levels of integration, Jewish clubs did not receive an entirely positive reception from both the local population and the wider golfing community. In April 1937, for example, it was reported in the *Jewish Chronicle* that Potters Bar Golf Club had been the target of an attack by local vandals. As well as pouring acid onto the club's greens in the shape of a swastika, the intruders also painted anti-Semitic graffiti on the outside walls of the clubhouse.[75] Some within golfing circles criticised Jewish clubs for apparently catering for the 'flashy' tastes of their members. Cousins has noted that because many Jewish clubs were created from scratch and were furnished with modern facilities, the clubs themselves and the members were viewed by some as overly 'opulent and ostentatious'.[76]

It seems that the opening of 'parallel institutions' for golf also had the effect of liberalising the membership policies of many local non-Jewish clubs. The irrational 'fear' that many clubs apparently felt concerning being 'taken over' by Jews was

[72] *Yorkshire Evening News*, 21 February 1931.

[73] Swift, *'Are you made up?'*, 33.

[74] Interview with William Hiscox, 28 July 2009. In recent years, concerns have been raised of the decreasing number of Jewish members of the various Jewish golf clubs. *Jewish Chronicle*, 13 August 2010.

[75] *Jewish Chronicle*, 9 April 1937.

[76] Cousins, *Golf*, 141.

lessened if a Jewish club opened in the vicinity.[77] For example, one member of the Bonnyton Moor Golf Club noted that it had become markedly easier for a Jew to join a non-Jewish club after Bonnyton's opening in 1957. He remarked that 'now that there is a Jewish club, non-Jewish clubs are more ready to accept Jews'. He added that 'they know there's no danger of them being swamped…Knowing that there is a Jewish club in the area, they are not worried'.[78]

Conclusions

Whilst the opening of Jewish clubs may have had an effect on anti-Semitism within the sport, it is not to say that discrimination has disappeared in the period since the 1960s. Whilst the presence of Jewish clubs has had the effect of making the sport more accessible for Jewish enthusiasts, anecdotal evidence suggests that anti-Semitism is still evident within the British golfing community. In an interview with the former President of one Jewish golf club it was noted that several current members had found it extremely difficult to join certain local clubs – seemingly for no other reason than that they were Jewish.[79] Similarly, a former President of the Association of Jewish Golf Clubs and Societies noted in 2010 that a Whitefield club member 'went on endless waiting lists for golf clubs without ever securing memberships'.[80]

Anti-Semitism may be less common in recent times than in the period from the 1890s to the 1960s, yet the decreasing number of Jewish golfers is also an

[77] See, for instance, *Jewish Chronicle*, 22 September 1978; Cousins, *Golf*, 140-1.

[78] SJAC, Interview with Philip Jacobson (1989).

[79] Interview with Michael Leek, 28 July 2009.

[80] *Jewish Chronicle*, 13 August 2010.

important factor to consider; something in itself which has caused significant problems for these 'Jewish' organisations. As secularisation, intermarriage and emigration has contributed to the decline of the Anglo-Jewish population since the 1950s, so too has the size of the Jewish golfing community decreased.[81] The result of this has been that all Jewish clubs, but particularly those located in provincial communities, have struggled since the 1960s to attract Jewish members. During the 1970s and 1980s, Lee Park in Liverpool launched several initiatives to attract Jewish members with little success. By 2004, the club's membership was said to be only 25 per cent of Jewish background.[82] Similarly, in Solihull, Shirley Golf Club's Jewish membership underwent a significant decline from the mid-1960s onwards. In 1967, 47 per cent were Jewish, decreasing to 35 per cent in 1974. Over the last decade, in particular, numbers of Jews at the club have been 'rapidly decreasing'.[83] All this led the *Jewish Chronicle* to note in 2010 that 'there is simply no future for Jewish golf clubs'.[84]

Whilst the future of Jewish involvement in golf may look bleak, this article has made it clear that the past has also been blighted by anti-Semitism and racism. It is evident from this analysis that Jews interested in the game have encountered hostility from all angles throughout large parts of the twentieth century. Whilst the 'restrictive…ethic' prevailing within middle-class sport in Britain may partly explain the generally exclusive attitude towards membership held by many golf clubs, it is clear that a 'veiled, but unmistakeable…anti-Semitism' has also been widespread

[81] Endelman, *The Jews,* 229-56

[82] Swift, *'Are you made up?'*, 33.

[83] Interview with Michael Leek, 28 July 2009; Hiscox, *Shirley Golf Club*, 84.

[84] *Jewish Chronicle*, 13 August 2010.

within the sport.[85] Ironically, the group which so many golf clubs were keen to bar were much more like themselves than they seemingly appreciated. Jews interested in golf were largely 'Anglicised', were socially, geographically and economically mobile, were sporting both on and off the course and were enthusiastic about golf and the social, business and leisure opportunities which the sport presented. Many of them were, in essence, the perfect golf club 'material'.

Not only did the Jewish community clearly face anti-Semitism in the sporting arena, but they also used sport as means of responding to discrimination and racism. Jewish enthusiasts, often with the considerable support of their local communities, found ways and means to play golf in a friendlier and more agreeable environment. The eagerness and resourcefulness shown by the Jewish golfing community in establishing 'parallel institutions' - which symbolically remained open to non-Jews - points to the communal spirit of the Jewish population and also demonstrates the evidently high regard in which Jews held their participation in this and other 'middle-class' sports. It is paradoxical, however, that the 'Jewish apartheid' which existed in British golf meant that the wider golfing community could not benefit from the drive, finances, enthusiasm and sportsmanship of participants within this particular minority community. Arguably, anti-Semitism within golf evident through large parts of the twentieth century has undermined the financial, moral, social and sporting fabric of 'the Royal and Ancient game'.

TOTAL WORD COUNT: 8034 (including footnotes = 9675)

[85] Richard Holt, *Sport and the British* (Oxford, 1989), 131.