

Country life, 6 Jan 2010

Sport

The Golf Delusion

Steve Gould and D. J. Wilkinson
(Elliott and Thompson, £20)

IN 1951, the great Leslie King founded the Knightsbridge Golf School (KGS) in the basement squash courts of 47, Lowndes Square, SW1. It was from this unlikely location that, for 28 years, he preached his gospel of the integrated golf swing.

Steve Gould and D. J. Wilkinson, the inheritors of this unique establishment, have developed the method and spread the word to an eclectic array of golfers, both professional and amateur: Gary Player, Michael Bonallack, Julie Inkster and David Leadbetter are among the pros, and Sean Connery, Hugh Grant, Telly Savalas, Bruce Forsyth and Jackie Stewart are among the celebrities who have improved their game under the watchful eyes and clear instructions of the tutors. And the

number of lesser mortals who have cause to thank them is endless: bankers, lawyers, actors, stockbrokers, artists, businesswomen, housewives, the famous, the infamous (Lord Lucan was a pupil) and the unknown.

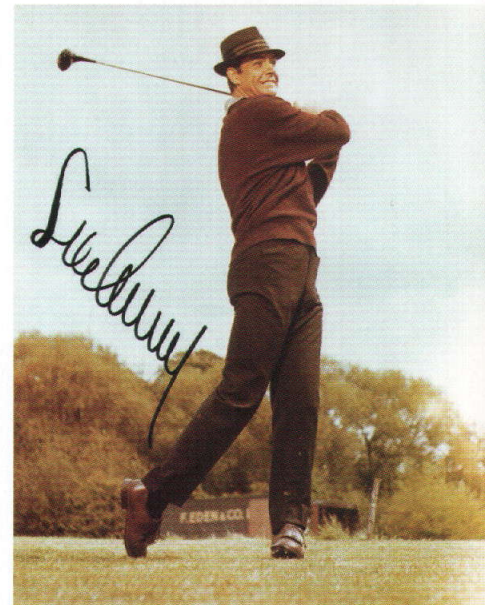
This book is, in part, a history of the school and the method; in part, a celebration of the institution. But, above all, it is a brilliant exposition of the system that has evolved under the tutelage of Messrs King, Gould and Wilkinson.

The history covers the development of the school and the method since 1951. This includes the use, in recent years, of modern equipment, such as video, largely to show clients what they are doing wrong, before helping them to do it right.

There are contributions from Hugh Grant, who writes the foreword, Gareth Gillatt, who became a scratch golfer after 'finding' KGS, and sports writer Tony Lawrence, for whom the

school was his 'last chance saloon'. There are stories of Sean Connery learning from Leslie King the skills he needed for his famous golf match in *Goldfinger*, of Telly Savalas perfecting his golf swing in front of a mirror in Harrods, of Henry Cotton being banned from practice because the mat was needed for tuition, and of Bruce Forsyth being cured of his Bollinger elbow—at least when swinging a club.

But it is the description and the illustration of the method that are at the heart of the book, set out with a clarity that should be a model for all manuals of golf, or of any other sport. Each element of the swing—from the grip, to the take away, to the backswing hand line (the master key to good golf), the downswing and the follow-through—is brilliantly explained, with superb photographs demonstrating both how to and how not to do it. Equally effective



Sean Connery learnt his golf skills for *Goldfinger* at KGS

are the sections on chipping, bunker shots and putting; this reviewer's short game improved beyond measure after 10 minutes reading those pages.

John Bromley-Davenport