



Play Away Please: The Tale of the Sale of Golf's Greatest Icon - The St Andrews Old Course Starter's Box

John Peter Hagen

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The St Andrews Old Course Starter's Box was sold in a controversial international auction on 10 September 2001, the day before the infamy of the Twin Towers attack. *'Play Away Please'* recounts the glory of the little building in St Andrews, 'the home of golf', and tells the tale of those who used its services for 77 continuous years.

Unlike many epics, the story does not centre on a rich dynasty or a heroic quest for the truth. Instead, it centres on the production of the perfect round of golf and the global marketing of the Box - one of the most celebrated buildings in the world of sport - as a brand and an icon. The book also chronicles the suspense and notoriety that greeted the Box after its voyage from Scotland to California, by way of the Panama Canal, and the role it assumed as an emotional balm for many in the aftermath of the 11 September atrocity.

Alas, nothing is as simple as it seems and miracles are rare. The businessman who bought the Box was imprisoned before it reached Los Angeles, accused of stealing millions from the real-estate development that was to be its home. Eight years later, a happy ending was finally brought about, but only after a healthy dose of gut-wrenching fear and suspense became a part of the story.

Supplemented with exclusive photographs, *'Play Away Please'* is also a personal story of patronage and odyssey to assure the Box's preservation as the sporting world's consummate symbol of integrity and fair play. Along the way, the author brings to life the unforgettable local characters of Fife, celebrating their customs, lifestyle and unique command of the English language.

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