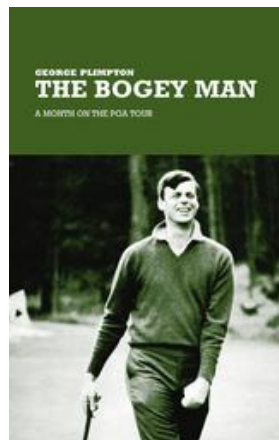


Valuable Book Group, LLC
Specialists in Rare and Antiquarian Golf Books
Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector

The Bogey Man by George Plimpton

This summer we have been looking at writers who only wrote one or two books about golf, but are worthy of a high place in the literature of the game. One such writer is George Plimpton. It would be difficult to have a better pedigree than Plimpton, who was educated at St. Bernard's School, an elite private school on Manhattan's East Side, then at Phillips Exeter Academy and then at Harvard. He was the editor of the *Harvard Lampoon* and also attended Kings College Cambridge. He edited the serious *Paris Review* for fifty years.

The Bogey Man was part of a series Plimpton wrote as he attempted various professional sports including football, tennis, golf and boxing. *Travel & Leisure Golf* ranked *The Bogey Man* as the eleventh best golf book in history in a 2004 compilation of the twenty-five best golf books ever. The book is not particularly collectable, but we like to focus on a good balance between rare and unusual golf books and those that we can enjoy reading. *The Bogey Man* sits squarely in the later category.



Plimpton was six foot four inches tall and had a well-heeled accent. He held true to his pedigree and sense of place in the class hierarchy throughout life. He played his golf at the ultra exclusive Piping Rock Club on Long Island's North Shore, a Charles Blair Macdonald designed gem.

As you would expect from Plimpton, the book is well researched, intellectual and funny. He was very well read and did extensive reading about the game while writing this book. He does a broad survey of golf literature within the book and quotes from, among others, Bernard Darwin.

While writing the book Plimpton played in a series of pro-ams in the late 1960s. He chose his golf courses well. After all, if you're going to play in a tournament, why not play in the Bing Crosby and play both Pebble Beach and Cypress Point?

The book has a real period feel to it. This is the era of cocktail lounges, players hanging out at the bar together and when professional caddies still stood on the range shagging balls for their players. For those too young to remember, Plimpton reminds us how hard it was to play alongside Arnold Palmer. "Arnie's Army" would begin moving as soon as he hit his shots, without regard to the other players in the group. Tiger Woods wasn't the first one to generate this phenomenon.

His chapter on yips is illuminating; I never know that Hogan, Snead and Vardon all suffered from a serious case of the yips.

When Plimpton died in 2003 his obituary called him a "gentleman editor, literary patron and participatory journalist". The world of golf literature lost a great writer when Plimpton died.

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