

The 19th British Silent Film Festival



P G Wodehouse in Silent Films

Saturday 16 September 11.00am

With live musical accompaniment plus readings by Neil Brand and Bryony Dixon



Image courtesy of the bfi Stills, Posters and Designs

Dir: Andrew P. Wilson, UK 1924. Editor: Challis N. Sanderson

Total running time: 90 mins approx., silent

Three short adaptations of the golfing stories of P. G. Wodehouse made by the Stoll Picture Productions Company and all starring Harry Beasley and directed by Andrew P. Wilson. The Stoll Picture Company loved golf. In October 1924, Oswald Stoll's production company released no less than seven golf-related films, six of which were adaptations of P. G. Wodehouse's humorous golfing tales. These six were released in two-reel serial form as *The Clicking of Cuthbert*.

***The Clicking of Cuthbert* (1924), 26mins**

Cast: Peter Haddon (Cuthbert), Helena Pickard (Adeline), Moore Marriott (Vladimir Brusiloff), Peter Upcher (Raymond), Harry Beasley (the caddie), Margaret Chatwyn (Mrs Willoughby Smethhurst), Wally Bosco (Brusiloff's golf opponent), E. Ashley Marvin (the oldest member)

The Clicking of Cuthbert serial employs golf-related humour in the style for which P. G. Wodehouse had become celebrated for. Each self-contained episode features a story based around a conflict between two men competing for the same girl. In *The Clicking of Cuthbert*, part one of the serial, the plot revolves around the inhabitants of Wood Hills who, we are told by the Stoll Herald, are 'divided into two camps – the Golfers and the

Cultured'. A champion golfer falls for a beautiful woman, only to find that her heart lies with one of 'the Cultured', a poet and a member of the literary and debating society. The golfer resolves to become an intellectual and, following a lecture by 'a highbrow Russian and typical whiskered Bolshevik' who happens to also be a brother golfer, the object of the golfer's affection realises that there may be something more to the game after all.

Rodney Fails to Qualify (1924), 27mins

Cast: Lionelle Howard (William Bates), Phyllis Lytton (Jane Packard), Dallas Cairns (Major Patmore), Victor Robson (Rodney Spelvin), Harry Beasley (the caddie), Sheila Astley (the skivvy), E. Spalding (the gardener), H. Clavering Craig (the caddie's mother)

A poet and a golfer are rivals for the hand of Jane. [When Jane meets Rodney, a man who shares her penchant for romantic fiction, she thinks she may have found her ideal mate. This is much to the dismay of William, who has been unable to tell Jane of his feelings for her. However, Rodney's poet's sensibility is more developed than his understanding of Jane's other passion - golf. While Rodney proves distracting, William is able to offer sound advice, ultimately winning Jane's affection]

Chester Forgets Himself (1924), 29mins

Cast: Ena Evans (Felicia Blakeney), Jameson Thomas (Chester Meredith), Harry Beasley (the caddie), J. Nelson Ramsay (the vicar), H. Clavering Craig (the caddie's mother), Nell Emerald (Mrs Blakeney), Mrs. Shields (the secretary)

A golfer seeks to impress a girl from an intellectual home with his own intellect, not knowing that she wishes to escape from the atmosphere of her home. [Felicia longs to escape her the pretensions of her highbrow family. A visit to her friend Jane gives her the ideal opportunity. The women visit the local golf course and find the caddie has been knocked unconscious by a stray ball. Chester and the Vicar take the Caddie home and Chester falls in love with Felicia. Convinced he is too uncouth for her, Chester pretends that he has cultivated friends



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