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Foreword

- ✓ Play Links for 6 Years
- ✓ Collect obscenely large number of courses
- ✓ Make an ultimately doomed attempt at using the APCD
- ✓ Write a comprehensive set of course reviews
- ✓ What next... ?

To fill in the gap before my next set of Clip Notes, I got to thinking about the MOPs, and that there were potentially myriad ways of scoring this game. I had toyed about with scoring methods in the past, but without ever committing to something firm.

Then suddenly: inspiration struck! NateDogg released his excellent Grid Iron Golf, using American Football scoring, and suddenly a whole new set of ways to play the game was spawned. Thinking over some of the most popular sports, I realised that very few were scored in a prosaic '1,2,3' style, and that these scoring systems would help jazz up one's round no end, especially when played competitively.

Most of these MoPs rely on achieving certain feats to score points. Many of them are score-related, but I've also tried to throw in as many of the Bingo-Bango-Bongo-type bonuses as I can without making things too complicated or losing focus of what you're trying to achieve. Most of these MOPs are hence unsuitable for computer players, so the default computer setting is to 'off'. As with any aspect of the Modes, you're welcome to tinker with it (I can hardly stop you, now, can I?), but if you do genuinely think you've made improvements to an MoP, I'd be grateful if you could drop me a line with the details of your changes.

One common theme I have tried to stick with is to allow generous gimmies, at the players' discretion. These are purely to keep your game moving at a good speed; one or two MoPs (for common sense reasons) are No Gimmies.

This Read-me is written not only as a guide to how you can expect to score on these games, but also with a little tongue-in-cheek guide to the sport in question. It might just help you to get immersed in some of the culture surrounding the game you're about to be playing. Let us not forget that golf is the greatest game of them all, and a little dig at our rivals never hurt anyone!

Some of these games bear fairly minimal resemblance to the sport they're supposed to be representing (it is a golf game, after all) and, most importantly, they're not to be taken too seriously. As an example of this, you can find the results of my inaugural Golf Olympics at the end of this Readme.

I hope that everyone looking to pass an idle half hour finds something to their satisfaction here, and who knows: one day we might see the inaugural Pot Green world championships!

NateDogg's 'Grid Iron Golf' is available at <http://www.linkscorner.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=19780>

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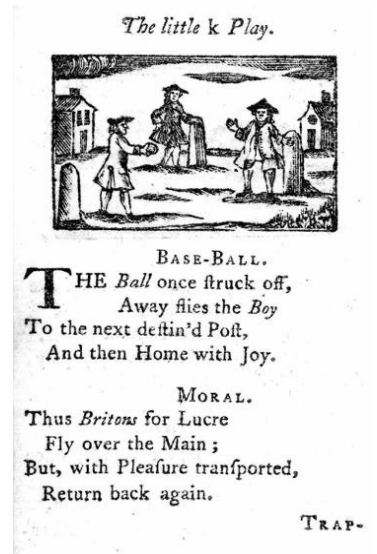
Baseball

Background

In mid-18th Century Britain, *The Little Pretty Pocket Book* was a bestseller among impressionable young girls. It described a game known as Base-Ball, one which proved popular among the participants in *Northanger Abbey* – a contemporary bodice-ripper of a yarn. It was certainly one of the games that landed at Plymouth with the *Mayflower*.

The American War of Independence and Civil War were no doubt contested around baseball diamonds, and 100 years later it was the USA's number-one sport. So much so, that they invented Abner Doubleday – a mythical Republican general who allegedly invented the sport. All this was just cover-up for the fact that millions of Americans were engrossed in a little girls' parlour game.

The modern rules evolved from a fire-fighters game in New York, and well into the 21st century Americans are still boasting about how well men in tight trousers can hit a bit of leather with a length of aluminium or oak. Hollywood has taught us that fathers with a job of any kind are expressly forbidden to watch their sons play baseball.



Whatever the origins, baseball is firmly embedded in the American spirit as their national sport, and despite the fact that no-one else other than Cuba and Japan play it with any seriousness, the alleged 'World' Series is the second-biggest event on the American sporting calendar, after the Superbowl.



Modern social commentators noted at length that the game is in fact deathly dull without copious quantities of beer to assist the spectator: this may in fact be true – four-hour long games stretch the modern attention span somewhat. And Americans have the nerve to call cricket dull!

Scoring

A game of baseball today is played between two teams – essentially of nine players each, although various substitutions and changes to the batting line-up are made throughout.

Each team plays nine innings. An innings ends after three 'outs' – that is to say after three players have been caught out, run out or struck out. You get struck out after failing to hit (in a roughly forwards direction) three consecutive balls – a 'strike', of course. There are a whole host of additional rules affecting the pitcher and man on strike: let us not concern ourselves with these here.

Simply, a team scores a point for every man taken around the diamond and back to home base. Doubles or Trebles are scored for hits that bring two or three men home in one go. A home run clears the boundary fence (and is invariably caught by a moronically-celebrating spectator) and allows your man to run around the diamond unimpeded, bringing home any men who happen to have been stationed at first, second, or third base at the time.

Modern standards of fielding mean that most innings are low-scoring affairs: zero or one run being by far the most common scores. BaseGolf is a slight exaggeration of this: perhaps players might imagine that they are up against a weak pitcher...

BaseGolf (2 players)

First up: select your best team of nine. Nine clubs, representing the nine players on a team.

BaseGolf is played over 9 holes or 'innings'. You play the batting part of each innings only. There are three Outs for every innings and after three Outs you will not score anything. Missing a fairway will cost you an Out, missing a Green In Regulation will cost you an Out, and failing to break par will cost you your final Out.

You have 10 mulligans over the course of your match. These represent the 'second chance' you get after one or two strikes.

So, how do you score? Score singles simply by making birdie. A double can be scored by hitting a birdie the difficult way, missing the fairway or GIR *en route*.

Scoring Eagle is a Home Run, which brings two other men home for three points.

Hints and Tips

- Choose a nine-hole Par 3 course for the most realistic scores. As always, Augusta Short Course comes highly recommended, or try The Reg or OutWorld for something a bit different.
- Focus on your game and don't worry too much about what your opponent is doing.
- Gusty conditions add the right amount of spice to the game.
- Take your chances on the approaches. There are no penalties for missing par.
- Good Mulligan use will be key. Save your Mulligans for the crucial birdie putts, especially when trying to make a Home Run. They are often best stocked up for the final couple of holes.

Par Score

Five or six points over the course of nine holes may well suffice.

Bowls

Background

In the corner of every municipal park in Great Britain and Australia, you will find an immaculately-tended square of grass next to a beaten-up old shack. It will invariably be roped-off and utterly deserted. And yet, for two hours a week, the bowling green becomes alive with immaculately-attired geriatrics gently rolling slightly ovular balls across the grass.

Bowls has an unfair reputation as a sport for the elderly, yet the indoor championships are fiercely contested and feature some young and flamboyant contestants. Well, when I say 'young', I mean 'under 50', and when I say 'flamboyant', I mean 'wearing colourful shirts'.



Truth be told, the biggest revolution indoor bowls has undergone in the last fifty years is when somebody thought of playing on blue carpet rather than green for a change.



The outdoor game, Crown Green Bowls, is played on an upturned saucer of a green in order to make participants look even more ridiculous as another one of their balls dodder off-course and into the gutter. Thankfully, Lawn Bowls is more popular: in the flatter game each player gets four bowls rather than two.

Scoring

Bowls is played over a certain number of 'ends', in which a player rolls out the small ball (the 'jack') and then successive players attempt to place as many of their bowls as possible closer to the jack than any of their opponents balls.

Quite simply, a player scores one point for each of his bowls that is closer to the jack than any of his opponent's bowls. With four bowls per player, there are a maximum of four points available per end.

Flat Green Golfing (2 players)

Like the real thing, this is a game of strategy in which the whole point is to out-position and outscore your opponent. Bogeys and birdies take second place to beating your opponent. The conditions are set to No Wind and Medium greens. Wind rarely makes an impact at bowls, and the bowling green resembles a reasonably swift putting green. You can take a full set of clubs and change the other settings at will.

Your round consists of 18 'ends' and the highest cumulative score wins.

A 1-point end is scored quite simply by scoring lower than your opponent, as in matchplay.

A 2-point end is scored not only by outscoring your opponents, but by placing closer to the pin than him (after all players are on the green, as in Bingo-Bango-Bongo).

3-point ends must fulfil all the requirements for 2-point ends, but your tee shot must be closer to the pin than your opponents.

4-point ends, like the real thing, are rare. You score four for an end when you manage all the above and score an eagle into the bargain.

Hints and Tips

- Target golf and Ryder Cup-style courses are good. Try the Belfry, Lost Lake Legend or Eagle Mountain.
- All the points rely on you outscoring and out-positioning your opponent. Therefore whoever is shooting second has a great advantage. If your opponent decides to lay up, you will do better by copying him.
- In a similar vein, be aggressive if shooting first. Make your opponent match your shots.
- The Par 3s, like the short ends in bowls, will often result in big scores. If you're shooting second and set yourself up for an easy birdie, you're likely on the way to three points.
- If your opponent looks to have the hole tied up, lay up rather than aim for the green and try to limit your losses to one point by getting inside his ball with your chip shot.

Par Score

You should be looking at scoring maybe 0.75 points per hole, on average, and 14 for the round.

Crown Green Golfing (2-4 players)

The crown green game is played with just two bowls each and up to four players.

Your maximum score for an end, therefore, is 2. Scoring works exactly the same as for 1-point and 2-point ends in the Flat Green game.

Hints and Tips

- It's harder to score here, so go for a tough course that will result in plenty of bogeys for your opponents. Qualchan, Te Ihi O Te Rangi or Kapalua Plantation offer themselves up well.
- Less sense in laying up here, especially when playing with four. This game is won by heroics from the fairway.

Par Score

Anything in double figures would be considered excellent against more than one opponent.

Curling

Background

Bowls on ice? Certainly a bit like it. Thanks to some terrific Winter Olympic coverage, Curling seems to have flourished into the boom sport of the 21st Century, and has practitioners in such unlikely places as China and Australia.

The jokes about sweeping are the stuff of history, but the obscene yelling that goes on up and down a curling rink lives on. Seriously – what is there to make such a fuss about?

For the uninitiated, curling is a remarkably simple activity, comparable to bowls in the need to put as many bits of heavy stone near a target as possible. For reasons lost to time, the target is called a 'kitchen' or 'house', hence the name of this MoP, and the heavy stones are lumps of granite with handles. If that wasn't hard enough, the whole thing takes place on ice. The much-

maligned sweepers are there to melt the ice to give a bit more distance to each stone.

Part of the skill that separates the best curlers is the gentle tweak each stone gets to 'curl' it behind other stones, and in top-level matches there tends to be much laying of 'guards' to stop this practice. Tactics and accuracy all in one – you don't get that in American Football.

I'm not going to take the Mickey out of curling, because I think it's brilliant.



Scoring

Like bowls, curling is played as a series of ends, in this case 10. Scoring is pretty much identical, with the team closest to the house scoring the number of stones that are closer than their opponents' nearest.

Driving in the Kitchen (2 players)

It's reckoned that, in terms of sheer skill, curling is one of the hardest sports on planet Earth. So it's Back tees, very slippery Medium/Fast conditions and no complaining!

You have nine ends (pretend the first was a match-off), played on the back nine of any golf course you care to name.

To win a one-point end, you simply need to outscore your opponent. If the scores are tied, it's a match-off (0-0).

For a two-point end, you need to additionally never have been in the fairway.

For a three-point end, you need to additionally have hit the longest drive overall.

For a four-point end, you also need to have visited the sand at some point.

For the ultra-rare five-point end, you need to have been in the water too!

Needless to say, it's not advisable to keep trying for huge scores!

Hints and Tips

- The difficulty of the course is less important than good putting conditions. Pick something recent where the greens are less likely to be a problem. Royal Troon, Excelsior or Bunclody would all fit the bill.
- It's important to pace yourself. Going all-out for a four-point end is likely to end up with you being trounced. Hitting the fairways is not always a bad idea.
- The best holes will be dog-legs, where you can overshoot the fairway and try for three points.
- Settle for a simple up-and-down par at the short holes.

Par Score

There is a fair dependence on how aggressively you play, but 6 or 7 points will win most matches.

Showjumping

Background

If your new girlfriend has a long ponytail, big thighs, a pronounced overbite, and says 'Nay' rather than 'No', it's a good chance you've stumbled on one of the horsey set. They are that inexplicable breed of women whose steed is the most important thing in their life; who say "haw, haw, haw" when they laugh, and don't worry about the fact that jodhpurs make their bum look really, really unattractive.

Such women are generally to be found at weekends sat in a freezing-cold field on foldaway directors' chairs watching similarly inclined people urge their horses over jumps (notably, much smaller ones than those you see on TV). At least it all makes a bit more sense than dressage, pronounced with the emphasis on the last syllable, which is little more than parade-ground drill for ponies.

Showjumping, of course, has its origins in field hunting, where it was necessary to urge ones horses to demolish large amounts of people's property in order to chase a bunch of dogs trying to kill a fox. For some reason, people frown on this sort of activity these days.



The British royal family, bless 'em, have done nothing to play down the stupifying dullness of showjumping. Both Princess Anne and daughter Zara Phillips are world champions and have won the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year on the basis of their ability to grasp big animals between their thighs.



Scoring

Ever since showjumping was legalised for the working classes (in some areas of Sussex it's still strictly frowned upon), there have been debates over the scoring system.

Put simply, it is a person's time that counts, although points are added onto the score for knocking down portions of jumps, if a horse refuses a jump, for going round the course the wrong way, or for the horse or rider falling. Certain penalties also apply to water and 'special' jumps.

The penalties range from 2 points (2 seconds added to the time) to outright elimination, but vary massively between different events. Given that the sport is reasonably popular over most of Northern Europe (plus New Zealand, who must find it very difficult to organise international matches), it's unlikely there will ever be an agreed international standard.

Gee Up! (1-8 players) (3-8 in the Team variant)

The scoring is very simple indeed. Although there is sadly no facility to play speed golf, all the scoring is arranged around penalties for...erm...doing things you shouldn't be doing. So no peeing in the bushes like you do at your home course!

To make avoiding the hazards as difficult as possible, the MoP is set to Champ Click, back tees and Breezy wind conditions. You have a couple of Mulligans, but they don't come cheap.

Points are added for 'faults' and the lowest score wins.

Time Penalty	1 point added for scoring a bogey or worse.
Knockdown	2 points added for hitting the sand and scoring a par or worse.
Double Knockdown	3 points added for hitting from sand to more sand.
Refusal	4 points added for using a Mulligan.
Fall	9 points added for hitting the water and scoring a par or worse.
Dismount	9 points added for hitting OB and scoring a par or worse.

There is also a Teams variant of Gee Up! Players can select the size of teams, and unbalanced teams are allowed. The larger the team, the harder it is to play well! There are no gimmies, 5 Mulligans each, and the scoring is slightly altered:

Team Time Penalty	4 points added for scoring a bogey or worse (this MoP is Bestball-style teams, so all team members must fail to break par).
Individual Time Penalty	1 point added for hitting a tree
Knockdown	2 points added for hitting the sand.
Double Knockdown	3 points added for hitting from sand to more sand.
Refusal	4 points added for using a Mulligan.
Fall	9 points added for hitting the water.
Dismount	9 points added for hitting OB.

Hints and Tips

- Although it's obviously unfair to compare scores on different courses, you'll get a better game from playing on courses with plenty of hazards. Try Doral Great White, Bethpage Black or – best of all – Watery Grave.
- It won't require much thought to realise that ultra-conservative golf is the order of the day. It's much better to miss your par than be punished for risky shots.
- Take mulligans to avoid falls or dismounts, and don't try the same shot again!
- 'Hitting a tree' includes most other course objects, including long grass, so be careful!
- If playing in a team, try to make sure that each team member takes a different strategy for the hole, to minimise the risk of you all making the same costly mistakes.
- It will be noted that large teams will score less well. Why not play two good players against one less-able player?

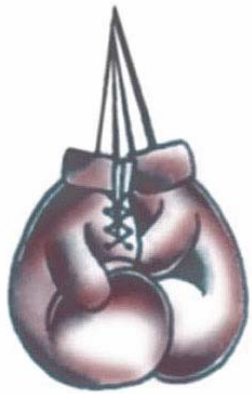
Par Score

Give yourself a pat on the back if you score anything less than 20.

Boxing

Background *(with thanks to Terry Pratchett)*

The Marquis of Queensbury was a British aristocrat who got beaten up a lot. He decided this wasn't a good idea and developed a set of rules which allow him to ponce about waving his fists in the air. Before getting beaten up a lot. His idea of a fair fight developed into the allegedly noble art of boxing, proof – if proof were required – that people will pay a lot of money to see two thugs smack seven merry shades of hell out of each other. All for the rather dubious honour of being able to hold the referee's hand at the end.



Frankly, anyone who boxes doesn't stand much of a chance in a street brawl or the Ultimate Fighting Championship (the two are occasionally indistinguishable). Remember the boxer in Streetfighter 2? The one who was always really, really easy to beat, despite being an alleged 'boss'? I rest my case.



Nowadays, there is a big stretch between professional and amateur boxing. And by 'amateur boxing', I mean the type which takes place competitively in a ring before an audience, rather than outside a pub at 1am in Glasgow. Amateur boxers now come dolled up in vest, headgear and armguards and aren't permitted to hit each other. Professional boxers wear just a pair of enormous shorts and a pair of enormous gloves. Because they're getting paid a small fortune, it's perfectly acceptable for them to risk serious brain damage, you see.

If you ever find yourself in a boxing ring and don't want to be there, ask the excitable-looking bloke in the corner to chuck you a towel. That usually does the trick.

Scoring

Whereas professional boxing is scored on a mysterious and possibly fictional scale involving luck, judgement and expensive bribery of judges, amateur boxing is thankfully more rigid.

Amateur matches usually take place over 6 or 12 rounds (depending on the status), and each boxer is nominally scored out of 10 for each round.

If neither boxer excels or lands clean punches, the round will be scored 9-9; you could call 9 more of a par score. If a boxer lands a clean punch or two, he will score ten. Points are likewise deducted for taking too many punches, being knocked down, for the referee having to give a standing count, or for infringements of the rules. In practice, a boxer is rarely knocked out for the count these days: referees tend to stop matches if they feel a particular contestant is taking too much punishment.

Golf In The Squared Circle (2 players)

2 players square up to each other for a 'match-and-a-half' of 18 rounds (or 18 holes, as you like to call it). Play off the back tees to show you're 'well hard', and Mulligans are strictly forbidden!

Hitting par for a 'round' will score you a standard 9 points. A birdie (or better) is worth 10 points; a bogey just 8.

Hitting the hazards is equivalent to taking punches: you really will feel the blow as you slice into the rough for the second straight time. Every hit of the rough or sand costs a point off your round score. Hitting water (a Knockdown) or OB (a Standing Count) costs two points!

Hints and Tips

- The rough imposes sharp penalties. Play at a course with generous fairways, such as St Andrews, Cara Brae or Northern Dunes. You might want to consider moving your normal difficulty level down a notch on tougher courses.
- Being aggressive off the tee will solve nothing.
- Consider a safe chip to the fairway rather than a heroic escape when in trouble.
- Unlike real boxing, you don't need to pay too much attention to your opponent in order to score well. Like the real thing, though, you will need to be defensive and keep that guard up!

Par Score

150 will represent an excellent round of golf.

Association Football (Soccer)

Background

Never, in the history of organised sport, has 90 minutes of men running around on grass given so much opportunity for spectators to consume silly amounts of lager, Bovril and meat pies, shout abuse at the man in the middle, and get arrested for the police for committing violence. In Turkey, they commit murder.

The world's most popular sport (except in the USA, where it comes in 19th behind cow-chip flinging, rodeo, and going down to the basement without a torch) is remarkably simple: force a gratifyingly spherical ball between two posts without the use of your arms or shoulders. Hence, the name 'football': a simple limb-related premise which the Americans seem to have thus far failed to grasp.



Despite having lower final scores than any other sport, plus the slightly alienating concept of a draw being a perfectly valid result, football is massive. In fact, I'm not even sure why I'm writing so much about it.



In London in Victorian times, scoring goals the easy way was deemed insufficiently challenging, and a couple of extra posts were added for extra scoring complexity. In light of making this MoP, it's a shame that this wasn't kept on, but the country reverted to boring old Sheffield Rules after a while, and slowly these became adopted around the world. It has also spawned the Championship Manager series of computer games, the sole reason I don't spend more time on Links and writing garbage like this.

Scoring

Score a goal, get a point.

Simple, huh?

Now go back and see how much I had to write about baseball.

Golf Match Of The Day (2 players)

Named after the BBC's famous football highlights programme, this is as competitive but low-scoring as the real thing.

To win a football match, you have to be able to be tougher than your opponent in midfield (hit closest to the hole after the drive), accurate with your passing (hitting closest to the pin once both players are on the green), and have a great finish (outscore your opponent). If you can do all this AND break par, then you'll score a goal. A tough call, eh?

You only take your 11 players (clubs!) out on the course with you (in a football-esque 3-5-2) formation, and only have 2 Mulligans (representing, in a slightly old-fashioned way, your two substitutions).

Hints and Tips

- Unless you're a sucker for punishment, opt for courses that have flat greens and hazards well-placed for errant tee shots. Esker Field, Druid's Glen and Black Rose Valley would fit the bill.
- Save your Mulligans for those crucial goal-scoring putts. You don't know when you might get another chance.
- The tee shot will decide whether you will attack or defend for the rest of the hole. Don't be tempted to switch roles.
- This MoP rewards the highlight-reel shots. Go for the green!
- Be as brave as you can off the tee. Missing the fairway won't matter a jot if you put yourself ahead of your rival.
- When defending, lay up whenever possible and try to chip inside your opponent's ball to stop him scoring.
- Par 3 holes will be where many points are won. Those shooting second have a huge advantage.

Par Score

Be content with two or three goals.

Orienteering

Background

Lost. In the middle of nowhere. Nothing but trees every way you look. Your map is sodden rags. Your compass seems intent on spinning around in circles continuously. It's raining continuously, your feet are soaking, and you've no idea where you are. Suddenly, you are overtaken by thirty middle-age women wearing tracksuits and jogging with their elbows tucked in. How come they always seem to know where they're going?

Orienteering truly is the sport for the masses. Up to 30,000 people have been known to take part at any one time. There are age divisions literally from eight to eighty. And it consists of little more than half-running around the countryside. Jogging gone mad?



The basic idea, and tell me if you've heard this before, consists of madly pursuing a fixed route around the countryside, trying to beat the scores of a large field of players, and inevitably being disappointed with one's own performance. Sound familiar, golf fans? Nowadays, they have fancy card punchers at the control points, but the good old-fashioned ones still use wooden posts with obtuse bits of code on. Now that's keeping it simple.



Scoring

Generally speaking, people score for making it to control points. The further off the beaten track the control point, the more points (sadly, I was unable to replicate this bit, although it would have improved the MoP no end).

Points are, naturally, deducted for going over unrealistic time limits; one more reason we should be grateful that we have no facility on Links for speed golf.

Golfienteering (1-8 players)

Just like the real thing, Golfienteering is a wild and rough game that forces you off the ideal route in pursuit of points.

The rules are very, very simple, although I don't think you're going to like them. To replicate the wilderness, you'll be playing off the back tees and under Breezy conditions. There's no doubling back, so Mulligans are strictly forbidden.

Clock in at a control for each hole simply by hitting a tree (or other 2D object). Sign in at Par (or less) to score 5 points for the hole. If you don't make it back in Par, you lose 2 points.

Hints and Tips

- Courses with prominent trees and little undergrowth make for a good, fair test here. Oakland Hills South, New York Memorial and Frankfurter come highly recommended. Piazza Metallica isn't an obvious choice, but there are plenty of good objects to cannon off.
- Try and hit your tree off the tee. Doing it later and making par will be very tough. Punch shots are good if the wind is against you.
- Remember that even though long grass counts as 'trees', escaping from the thick undergrowth on many courses is a very difficult prospect.
- If you can, use rocks or walls in lieu of trees.
- Better to score par and hit no trees than score bogey while trying to extricate yourself from the deep rough. This is particularly true on the Par 3 holes.
- Don't feel that you have to hit trees on every hole. A sprinkling of check-ins should guarantee you a good score.

Par Score

On some courses, you feel that you'd do well to break into positive figures! Realistically, you should be aiming at about 20 points for most rounds.

Ten-pin Bowling

Background

In Britain we have pubs. Fat men lounge about in polo shirts and drink beer in order to try and get away from their wives. In America, they have bowling alleys.

British bowling alleys are lightweight family entertainment, where the little kiddies can be happily disposed of for a couple of hours while Mum and Dad go shopping. In America, they are seedy, alcoholic refuges of the damned and the local underground mafia. Bowling leagues are life and death situations and the crucial 300 game is roughly the social equivalent to being elected President. One's personal bowling ball is an item to be worshipped and will be meticulously polished with the same thoroughness as a Brit would polish his Jaguar. The difference, of course, being that a Jag costs about a thousand times more. Fred Flintstone, in so many ways the archetypal American alpha-male, numbers it among his hobbies, except he plays with rocks.



By far better entertainment (and avoidance of strained wrists through trying to play with the 20lb ball) is watching bowling on TV, pointing and saying 'I can put spin on it like that'. Regardless of the fact that when *you* try this at the alley, the ball either bananas into the gutter, describes a physically impossible S-shape before hitting the pins with insufficient momentum to knock them all down, or curves the way you're not expecting before clipping the number 10 pin for a disappointing single.

Scoring

Bowling is played on an individual basis over ten frames. Each player gets two balls per frame.

If a player whacks all the skittles on his first attempt, he scores a Strike, and scores 10 points, plus the number of pins knocked over by his next two balls. He doesn't get a second ball for that frame.

If a player takes two balls to down all ten, he scores a Spare: 10 points plus the number of pins knocked over by his next ball.

Otherwise a player scores the number of pins he knocks over with his two balls.

If a player scores a Strike or Spare in the tenth frame, he gets one or two extra balls in order to score his bonus.

Quick calculators will realise that the maximum possible score for the 10 frames is 300.

Golfing Alley (1-6 players)

Low scores are important in the golfing version, therefore you will play from the front tees. Gimmies are allowed within 4 feet. You will play a 9-frame (or 9-hole) game – pretend you missed the first one!

To score a Strike, you need to drive both the fairway and GIR, and score a birdie. Alternatively, drive within 4 feet on a Par 3 and take your gimmie. Alternatively, score an Eagle or better by whatever method you see fit.

You can score a Spare by scoring a birdie despite missing the fairway, or one-putting for a birdie 2 on a Par 3. If you chip-in for a birdie at any point, you score a Split Spare, which means no extra points; just the pride in doing it the difficult way.

Sadly, I cannot incorporate the 'add next score' method of scoring Strikes and Spares, so a Strike scores 30 points and a spare scores 20 points. Consider me generous.

If you only get par, you failed to make Spare, and score 9.

If you get a Bogey or worse, then those ominous words 'Gutter Ball' should flash up, and you score 7.

Obviously, the perfect score here is only 270 points.

Hints and Tips

- Low-scoring courses are your best bet. Try Old Cypress East, Mordhel, Merion East, or any course with S/S greens.
- Mulligans have been left to your discretion. If you're being strictly competitive, it would be better to turn them off. Playing on your own, perhaps you could see how few Mulligans it takes to shoot a perfect 270 game. Two games for the price of one!
- Throttle down to a 3 Wood off the tee and be aggressive thereafter.
- Birdies win matches in this MoP more than any other. If you settle for Par, you'll often lose. Bogey is not too harsh a penalty, so fire away on the Par 5s.
- Recorded rounds can make a good opponent if you can't find any human players to play against in the middle of the night!

Par Score

As with most amateur bowling, a score in three figures will give you some gloating rights.

Formula 1

Background

In America they have NASCAR. Thirty lantern-jawed gentlemen hare around a banked oval track for a couple of hours. There's plenty of overtaking, lightning-quick pitstops and generally a very tight finish.

The rest of the world have to make do with Formula 1 Grands Prix. Twenty skinny, blonde boys chase a lantern-jawed German around a track for an hour and a half. Overtaking is apparently forbidden, pit stops take several minutes thanks to the EU safety regulations that bundle the pit crew up in so much protective gear and radiation suits that they can't walk properly, and one chap (the aforementioned German) invariably finishes a couple of minutes ahead of everyone else. All this takes place on tracks with so many twists and turns that drivers have to average less than 100mph.

OK, this is a bit of an exaggeration. But not much.

During the first three-quarters of the 20th Century, human endeavour was to make the



set of linkages attached to the common internal combustion engine travel faster. A natural offshoot of this was to race these 'automobiles' to see which was the fastest. Unfortunately, this seems to have descended into a competition to make cars slower and safer. I blame Volvo. Cheating has been a very exciting offshoot of this in recent years, and has opened up whole new possibilities for getting oneself killed, sacked or ridiculed in the press.

The future of Formula 1 has been in doubt for some time, due to the withdrawal of tobacco sponsorship and the onset of TV-viewer apathy. I see it evolving into Volvo racing, where nobody is permitted to travel faster than 50mph, and a clash of bumpers results in the

immediate cancellation of the race so that both participants can be rushed to hospital.



Scoring

These days F1 contains between 10-12 very rich teams. The poor teams were sidelined at some point during the 1990s when people complained that they were holding up the better drivers, thus depriving spectators of yet another viewing pleasure.

Each team enters two drivers and presumably two cars as well. After qualifying for their place on the grid (pretty damn important, given current attitudes towards overtaking), they welly it around the track for 200 miles or so. First place score ten points, and then down the field: eight, six, five, four, three, two, one.

All this happens 17 times a season. How exciting.

GP Golf (4-8 players)

Hopefully, this is a lot more fun than the real thing. It's one of my favourites, contrary to all odds.

Each player represents a team, not an individual driver. This is because they can pick up two (or more, actually) scores per hole. There is 'a season' of 18 Grands Prix to play.

You'll play without Gimmies (for game mechanic reasons) or Mulligans (for cheating reasons). Greens are set to Moderate/Medium to represent a reasonably warm and accommodating track.

If you want to simulate staggered qualifying, have a 'drive-off', and play the players from different tees: the best from the Ladies, the worst from the Back tees.

Scoring is complicated. Listen carefully...

- The first to finish wins, just like in real life. So not the best score, but the first player to sink their ball. 10 points.
- The best score (without ties) sets the lap record. 8 points.
- Closest to the hole after all players have hit the green gets the last podium place. 6 points.
- The first player on the green has timed the middle section of their race well. 5 points.
- The longest drive in the fairway has got away quickly from the grid. 4 points.
- The closest tee shot to the pin took off *too* quickly and had to readjust their strategy. 3 points.
- The player with the fewest number of putts finished strongly but too late. 2 points.
- The player with the worst score (no ties) tailed in last. 1 point.

It will be noted that it is possible for one golfer to pick up more than two point bonuses on a hole, which is not representative of the traditional 2-car teams. Well, life's not perfect, I'm afraid.

It's also noticeable that some of the point bonuses may not be won on a given hole.

Hints and Tips

- Tough or very strategic courses make for a diverse round of GP Golf. I recommend Owelstery White Horse or Sawgrass, although a lot of Fantasy-type courses such as Rivendell would be very suitable.
- Six players makes for the most fair distribution of scores, although anything from 4 to 8 is very good.
- Like the real thing, your strategy is crucial. Why not ease back on your drive in order to try and hit the green first for five points?
- Lay up for a shot at third place if you can't do better. Bear in mind that other people will be doing the same so make sure your chipping game is good.
- Missing the fairway presents a lot of point-scoring opportunities. But it also carries risks with it.
- Par 5s will make or break several people's round. The 3-shot holes will be rife with strategy and one-upmanship, so don't be cowed!

Par Score

It largely depends on the number of teams. Be happy with a score in the region of 150 if there are four of you, but settle for 100 if there are six players.

Rugby 7s

Background

As Rugby Union, but with 7 men.

The 7s game is faster, for fitter players, and doesn't involve ugly men with cauliflower ears quite as much. It's played on the same size pitch as the big boys' game, which makes it reliant on accurate passes and tackling and not quite so much on brute force, ignorance, and getting scared like a nancy-boy and kicking the ball as far away from you as possible. Undoubtedly a more attractive and accessible game for the part-time supporter, it has become an official Commonwealth Games sport in recent years, and is on the shortlist for inclusion in the Olympics too.



Scoring

As Rugby Union. Scores tend to be much higher, even though the game only lasts 14 minutes

Hong Kong Golfing 7s (2 players)

The Hong Kong 7s is the premier event of the miniaturised game of rugby. It tends to be fast, frantic and invariably won by someone from the Australasian continent. England had a very temporary superiority not too long ago: this bout of un-British-like expertise seems to have been quelled.

You can select just seven clubs, to represent your seven plays, but Gimmies remain fixed at five. There are no condition requirements, unlike the other two rugby games.

To keep the scores realistically high, you'll still play 18 holes, not a 'shortened' version of 9.

For all other details, see page 22.

Hints and Tips

- Give yourself a break with only seven clubs, and play on a fairly easy course. Something like Inverness or Stonebridge would do nicely, although the likes of Wellington Point or River Creek Estate would also fit the bill.
- You'll be amazed at how well you can play without any wooden clubs in your bag.
- Make use of the flexibility offered in playing conditions to beat your opponent.
- If you've conceded a near-certain penalty on a hole by hitting a hazard, concentrate on holing out without any more faults, rather than trying to rescue your three points.
- As ever, save your crucial Mulligans for those Try-scoring putts.

Par Score

You might well find some slightly higher scores than the fifteen-man variant. Twenty points would be considered a good round.

Rugby Union

Background

Is there really a sport where wheezing, 50-year old men with broken noses can play alongside lithe, athletic youngsters? Yes, of course there is: it's Rugby Union; quite possibly the most diverse sport in the UK. At the very top level, you might find finely-honed athletes at the peak of physical perfection; everywhere else it's played by an enormous range of people, from overweight wrecks to pathological cowards. Participants are expected to follow up 80(-ish) minutes of hard punishment by telling filthy jokes and quaffing enormous quantities of beer. Compare with football, where the players are ushered home for a good night's sleep, leaving the crowd to do that sort of thing.

Legend has it that William Webb Ellis, at Rugby Public School (explanation for Americans: a Public School is actually a private school, despite the confusing name), picked up the ball during a game of football, and started running around with it. Rather than being pummelled senseless by all the biggest kids on the pitch, as would doubtlessly happen these days, he was credited with inventing a new sport. Try inventing a sport like that today...



Rugby Union is a damn confusing game to watch. Not only have you got to get to grips with the complicated vocab ('scrum', 'ruck' and 'maul' all sound like they should be the same thing, but emphatically aren't), but each player has a rigidly defined position and skills to match (although English hookers [this is a POSITION! Not a prostitute] have lacked the key ability to throw straight for several years now). Plus, they're only allowed to pass backwards: and what's the sense in that? I've been watching rugby for fifteen years now, and still can't explain the offside Law.

Oh, if you're ever unfortunate enough to find yourself in Wales, under no circumstances refer to rugby as a 'game'. It is more correctly described as a 'religion'.

Scoring

The main objective in Rugby is to touch the ball down over the opponents back line (or 'try line'). In Rugby Union, this is a Try, and worth five points. The Try can then be converted by a kicker, who aims to get the ball over the crossbar (the posts are H-shaped) from a point of their choice on the ground perpendicular to where the try was scored. A successful Conversion scores an extra two points.

Failing this, a team may choose to punt the ball over the crossbar by drop-kicking from their hands. This is inadvisable for lower-league players, who often have difficulty with an oval (and generally dilapidated and under-inflated) ball. Nevertheless, a successful Drop Goal is worth three points.

Breaking any of the multifarious Laws of rugby (and there are a surprisingly large number, given that it just appears to be a lot of big blokes wrestling) results in a penalty. If the opposing team think they are close enough, then they can place-kick the ball at the goal, similar to a conversion. Otherwise they just win possession. A successful penalty kick is worth three points.

Oval Balls Part I (2 players)

Because you're only allowed 14 clubs in your bag, your '15th player' is the Soft, Slow greens, which should yield some good chances at birdie.

The tees are set at Middle, for a suitable all-round challenge, but you'll have to play in the typically tough Windy conditions of a rugby match. You can have 5 Mulligans, representing a handful of substitutions throughout the game.

Simplest first: score a birdie or better and score a try. 5 points.

Kick placement is key in Union, so the longest fairway drive will earn a conversion if a try is scored, for an extra two points.

If you chip in from off the green for a Par, or worse: that's a drop goal for 3 points.

Because it's not possible to give your opponent points, then penalties will come off your score. And naturally, penalties are awarded for doing all the stuff you shouldn't be doing. Hitting the water, sand, trees or OB and scoring bogey or worse will cost you three points.

Hints and Tips

- A good course will be a mixed bag with a fair sprinkling of hazards to prevent overconfidence. Hunters Wood, Augusta or Brookdale should stop people getting too carried away. Besides, it would be a novelty to play Augusta with slow greens!
- Don't put your all into recovery shots. Nine times out of ten, you'd be better off chipping out onto the fairway rather than risk another penalty.
- If you're having a bad hole, try a chip-in to salvage some points. This is always an option for the pros when they can't see a try-scoring opportunity.
- Use your substitutions wisely. Wait for a chance at the crucial seven-pointer.

Par Score

Scoring is perhaps not quite as easy as in the real thing. A score in double figures might well be enough to do away with your opponent.

Rugby League

Background

Not content with making a sport difficult, we Brits have had to add a second version with completely different rules and only a passing resemblance to each other. Rugby League is the preserve of gritty Northerners; men with flat caps and whippets who take solace in building dry stone walls and quaffing cloudy real ales. They frown down on Rugby Union and the Southern cider-drinking public schoolboys who invented it.

There are some crucial differences in the League game. The fact that there are only 13 men on each team being a major one. The sport has been professional for longer, and therefore



much better organised (when Union went professional it was to the demise of many lesser clubs). Scrums play little part, there is more passing, and a side is allowed but six tackles to score. There is less of the 'boot it up the other end of the field and let the other team cock it up' mentality, which reeks of unprofessionality. Oh, and there's a big hooter to mark full time, rather than the whims of the referee.



Problem is, it's deathly dull. Because we always lose to the Aussies. Although why this should distinguish it from any other sport is beyond me.

Scoring

Broadly speaking, the same range of scoring opportunities are available as in rugby league. Out of a broad desire to be different, though, there are different numbers of points available, and consequently, there are more tries and fewer penalties.

The modified scoring runs as follows:

Try	4 points
Goal	2 points
Field Goal	1 point

Oval Balls Part II (2 players)

Only 13 clubs of course. They've been selected for you to match the jersey numbers: 1 (Wood), 2 (Iron), 3 (Wood), 4-9 (Iron), 10-12 (Wedges) and 13 (Putter). Any 5-Wood devotees will have to make do without. You still have 5 substitutions to play with.

In the grittier Northern conditions, you'll be playing off back tees and with M/M greens (rugby league pitches tend to be better manicured than the Union equivalents). There are no penalties in the way of Oval Balls Part I.

Scoring for tries, penalties (Goals) and drop goals (Field Goals) is the same as in Union, only with a different number of points, of course.

It helps to get a running start to score tries in League; therefore the conversion is scored if your first shot is *furthest* from the pin.

Hints and Tips

- Because of the reliance on breaking par, it's best to play a course with some genuine Eagle opportunities. Charleton, Crandon Park and Munchen Nord would be good.
- Penalties are less painful in this version. There's very little point bothering with the chip-ins.
- Keep an eye on your opponent's score and use the Mulligans to deliver a crushing blow.
- It's easier to plan your conversion strategy than in the other variants. Teeing off second is excellent value because you can always play just inside your opponent.
- If it's too tough, move down to Pro Click for a while!

Par Score

You might do well just to scramble into positive points on the tougher courses. On easier tracks, a double-figure score would be par for the course.

Aussie Rules Football

Background

If I'm going to be honest, Aussie Rules Football is the one sport in this compilation which I haven't had much experience of watching, it not being widely broadcast (or broadcast at all for that matter) in the UK. I think I can safely call it either rugby with much more kicking or football with much more handling. The two things I do know for certain is that the players tend to wear sleeveless vests due to the fact that they save material after being torn off so much, and that spectators enjoy shouting "How big's your dick?" after goals. This is nothing to do with questioning the manliness of the player in question, but is a true Aussie-humoured anticipation of the gesture that will shortly be displayed by the goal umpire.

Because I know so little about the game, I present an Aussie Rules joke (easily adapted to your favourite sport):

A Collingwood fan dies on match day and goes to heaven in his Collingwood jumper. He knocks on the old pearly gates and out walks St Peter in a St.Kilda scarf.



"Hello, mate," says St Peter, "I'm sorry, no Collingwood fans in heaven."

"What?" exclaims the man, astonished.

"You heard. No Collingwood fans."

"But, but, but, I've been a good man," replies the Collingwood supporter.

"Oh, really?" says St Peter. "What have you done then?"

"Well," says the guy, "three weeks before I died, I gave 20 bucks to the starving children in Africa."

"Oh," says St Peter. "Anything else?"

"Well, two weeks before I died, I also gave 20 bucks to the homeless.

"Hmmm. Anything else?"

"Yeah. A week before I died, I gave 20 bucks to the Albanian orphans. "Okay," says St Peter, "you wait here a minute while I have a word with the governor."

Ten minutes pass before St Peter returns. He looks the bloke in the eye and says, "I've had a word with God and he agrees with me. Here's your sixty bucks back, now piss off."

Scoring

Rugby scoring is deemed to be a bit too complicated for most Australians, so they only have Goals and Behinds.

A 6-point Goal is scored by kicking between the central two posts, and the 1-point Behind for between the side goals (an interesting descent from 'proper' association football – see above)

Oz Rules Golf (2 players)

There's 18 men on the pitch – we can let you have your own bag of clubs, but no substitutes – they just don't work in this one. Conditions are yours to decide, and there are few requirements as regards clubs or Gimmies. All very laid-back in typical Aussie style...

A Behind will be scored if you drive closest to the pin, on the fairway and outscore your opponent.

Being worth six times as many points, the Goal is a bit harder. You have to drive furthest away from the pin, OFF the fairway and still outscore your opponent.

Real Aussie men don't play Par 3s. Use them for a side-bet or a game of One Up.

Hints and Tips

- Dog-leg holes with reasonable rough will give the best results. Redstone, St Christophers Bay and Dark Woods would all make interesting choices. Really difficult and fantasy courses are not out of the question, either.
- Don't play for a Goal unless you sense your opponent is out of position.
- Your choice off the tee will be crucial. Hit short on the fairway or long in the rough and you won't score, but you also need to consider what the impact will be on your opponent's scoring chances.
- Likewise, if you are teeing off first, make sure you hit the fairway to leave your opponent with an unappetising choice.
- Because the Par 3s don't score, use them to tee off second on the subsequent hole, when you'll be in charge of who scores what.

Par Score

Scores over 18 holes will represent about a quarter of a game of Aussie Rules and two or three goals could well take it. 10 points should be your target.

Pass The Pigs

Background

Admittedly, I might be pushing the boundaries of competitive sport a bit tightly with Pass The Pigs. It's a verifiable oddity – craps without the dice, and perfectly playable by grandma – that relies on scoring points by lobbing a couple of miniature plastic pigs across the table. Legend has it that it originated on a Devon farmstead as a pastime for two burly farmers and a Gloucester Old Spot. Maybe.

Pass The Pigs has not yet made it past the realms of cosy post-dinner game and into the seedy underworld of the British pub (alongside its stablemates: darts and dominoes). We can but hope and look forward to those days when burly men sip pints of ale in keen pursuit of that inviting Double Razorback.



Scoring

The oddball scoring of Pass The Pigs was its sole reason for inclusion in this set of MoPs. You score points for increasing rarities of pig throws, starting with one point for the relatively common 'Sider', where both pigs lay on their left or right side, up to the fabled Double Leaning Jowler, where both pigs (allegedly; I have never seen this happen) stand balanced on their noses and one front foot. The big catch, however, is that throwing a 'Pig Out' (one pig on its right side and the other on its left) will give you zero points for the round, regardless of what you have already scored. Worst of all, the dreaded 'Oinker' (both pigs touching after the roll) results in your score for the entire game being reset.

Pass The Putter (1-8 Players)

Play 18 holes, no Mulligans, with your choice of conditions. This is a risk-taking game, similar to Golfienteering. If you don't take chances away from the mown track, you won't win...

Sider	Hit into the rough	1 point
Razorback	Complete the hole without hitting fairway	5 points
Trotter	Miss the GIR	5 points
Snouter	Hit a tree	10 points
Leaning Jowler	Hit into sand	15 points
Double Razorback	Hit from sand to sand	20 points
Double Trotter	Miss a putt of less than 6ft	20 points
Double Snouter	Hit into water	40 points
Double Leaning Jowler	Hit OB	60 points
Pig Out	Score a bogey or double bogey	Score 0 for the hole
Oinker	Score worse than double bogey	Reset score for the round

Hints and Tips

- A tough game to pitch well, this one. You need a fairly easy course but one with its fair share of hazards. Try De Zalze Estate, Midnight GC, or Vista Verde.
- The game plays well with any number, but for real needle matches, two is best.
- Bunkers can be gold dust if you are accurate with your snap.
- If you're playing too well, miss a short birdie putt for easy points.
- It's worth planning what you intend to achieve on a hole before actually teeing off.
- Err on the side of caution at Par 3 holes, especially those over water. Three strokes can slip away too quickly if you're not careful.
- Keep an eye on the risks your opponents are taking and try to undercut them a little. You can score pretty well playing your normal game if the opposition is too aggressive.
- If you're forced to tee off first, then knock a shot into the first-cut rough and bide your time.

Par Score

200 would represent a good standard. The gamblers out there might want to aim for 250.

Cycling

Background

Ah, big muscle-bound men in strapping lycra, propped up by a meagre framework of aluminium and rubber. Frankly it doesn't get much more kinky than this, so really it's no surprise that the Brits and Aussies consistently vie for world championship status. Heroes abound on opposite sides of the world; Hoy, Pendleton, Kelly and Meares – all household names in the English-speaking antipodes.

The Tour de France is notorious for being the world's premier drug-taking event, with the Yellow Jersey being awarded to the participant who has taken the most steroids, and the King of the Mountains jersey heralding the highest cyclist. It's really no surprise that road racing these days is in something of a decline.



The number of bizarre track cycling events is legion, from the Points Race, which is apparently a perpetual world record attempt to get the highest number of people onto the velodrome track; through the Madison, which is something akin to tag-team wrestling; to (my personal favourite) the Keirin, where six men attempt to chase a pizza delivery boy on a scooter and steal his Meat Feast.

Scoring

It's medals, medals, medals and jersey in Cycling. Winning is everything, and second place is swiftly forgotten. With the odd exception of the Points Race, which makes for some intriguing golf...

The Points Race crowds half the population of a small European country onto the track and makes them ride around and around for 40 minutes, every now and then throwing in a sprint lap to keep the spectators amused. Riders are awarded 5,3,2,1 points for finished first through to fourth in the sprint laps, plus an extra-special 20 points for lapping the field.

Points Race (8 Players)

Well, you can't exactly 'race', as such with this one, but we can set up the greens to be pretty speedy. You will have some M/M greens to contend with, and a slight breeze, as might affect a perfectly balanced cyclist.

Every hole is a 'sprint'. It's all about your driving skills, this one.

5 points goes to the player who hits the longest drive on the fairway.

3 points to the player furthest from the pin after their tee shot

2 points for the first on the green

1 point for hitting the best score for the hole (ties are OK).

The winners will probably come from the Par 3 holes. Each Par 3 will have a closest-to-the-pin competition, as well as a sprint (although the 5-point bonus is not available). The closest to the pin will pick up 20 points for lapping the field!

Hints and Tips

- Courses with crafty fairway bunkers will lead to plenty of daring tee shots. Castle Rock and Spirit Hollow are excellent courses; Pilgrim Trails should be considered a must-try.
- Plenty of strategy to be had here. If you can't out-drive the opposition, you could still pick up 5 points for hitting a short drive and then having the first opportunity to go for the pin.
- The 1-point awards might prove match-winners, because ties are possible. Don't underplay yourself.
- Needless to say, save your highlight-reel shots for the Par 3s.

Par Score

On a course with 4 short holes, expect a winning score of around 35 points.

Snooker

Background

Ask an American what the second most popular TV sport is in England. The smart ones will say cricket or rugby; those less clued-up will probably go for tennis or golf (the really unclued-up ones say basketball). And they'd all be wrong. After football, of course, the most commonly-watched sport in the UK is snooker, which is best described to an American as pool after a lot of drugs.

The table is four times as big and the balls are half the size. The rules are easy to grasp, but the game is nigh-on impossible to play for the amateur. Before professional snooker in the 1960s, a snooker hall was more akin to a brothel or seedy bar than the home of sporting endeavour.



The introduction of snooker to the viewing public was little more than a vehicle for colour TV (Ted Lowe: "for those watching in black and white, the pink is behind the green"). But it took off massively, and snooker's key players became celebrities in their own right. All this despite the fact that it sometimes took well over half an hour for any points to be scored (over an hour if Terry Griffiths was playing Steve Davis) and that the commentators right up to the present day were capable of banalities to match any golf announcer. But, thrilling or nay, snooker is firmly here to stay.

Scoring

Players alternately try to build a 'break' as high as possible by alternately potting a red ball (of which there are initially 15, and are not replaced on the table once potted) and a 'colour' ball (any of yellow, green, brown, blue, pink and black; these *are* replaced after being potted). Reds score 1 each, yellow 2, green 3, brown 4, blue 5, pink 6, black 7. At the end of the 'frame' (as one game is known), then the colours are potted in sequence, but this has no bearing on the golfing version.

If a player fails to pot a ball, play passes over to his opponent. The proportions of the table and balls mean that a lot more safety play is used.

Matches are usually contested on a 'best of x frames' basis, with the number of frames being roughly proportional to the status of the match, up to around 35 frames (in the World Championship final).

Failing to hit the ball that is 'on' is a foul stroke and awards between 4 and 7 points to your opponent, depending on the nature of the foul.

Pot Green (2 players) (4 players in the Doubles variant)

In case anyone was wondering, 'Pot Black' was a famous BBC snooker programme in the 1970s and 80s.

There's not a breath of wind in the snooker hall, but the green surfaces are slick and slippery, so you'd better be sure your putting game is up to scratch. You're playing from forward tees, so you can go for those eagles!

Hit the fairway and you can consider yourself to have potted a red. 1 point is yours to keep.

The colour you pot depends on your performance from then on:

- Score an eagle – black ball. 7 points
- Hit GIR and score a birdie – pink ball. 6 points.
- Miss GIR but chip in for birdie – blue ball. 5 points.
- Hit GIR and score a par – green ball. 3 points
- Miss GIR and score a par – yellow ball. 2 points

Brown balls can be scored on the Par 3s by simply driving to within 15 feet of the flag, regardless of whether you sink the putt. 4 points, plus one for the red. If you can only get to within 30 feet, it's just the red ball for you.

The distribution of colours potted isn't quite representative of the real game (in which there are more blacks and pinks potted than anything else), but it doesn't make it too easy to score big.

Foul strokes have their place in Pot Green too. Hitting a bunker will cost you 4 points (you appreciate the opposition cannot be awarded the points), and hitting the water will cost you 7 points.

The Doubles variant of Pot Green is played exactly the same, but with two players (strictly alternating) on each side.

Hints and Tips

- To avoid going crazy, play on an open course with easy-to-hit fairways. Jackson Hole and Fairclinnis would both be a good idea, or try Lucia von Rheden for a change of pace.
- Obviously, hitting the fairway is absolutely crucial. Change down to an iron if you are at all unsure. Missing the fairways will cost you really heavily.
- Pace yourself on the Par 5s. There's not much to be gained for an eagle, but a lot to lose in the hazards.
- Even if you've a clear line to the green on shorter holes, you're better off playing for par. You can make a surprisingly good score by hitting red-green-red-green continuously and staying clear of the hazards.

Par Score

You can't hit a 147 maximum break here, but anything above 100 would still be considered excellent. Like the real thing, a break of 70-80 should be comfortably enough to win you the frame.

Wrestling

Background

Once upon a time, wrestling was a cosy English pursuit, beloved of commercial TV channels for Sunday-afternoon viewing. It was something you could quite happily sit down and watch with Granny. The nature of it being a 'sport' is perhaps somewhat dubious, given the knowledge to all and sundry that it was only glorified acting in tight pants.

But then, as ever, the Americans managed to get their hands on it and screw it up completely. Today's wrestlers, therefore, are not only quite boring, they make passable – and frequently laughable – attempts at vulgarity and assorted other rudeness to alleviate said boredom. The whole thing is presided over by megalomaniacs who believe it would be fun to cast themselves as crazy-eyed power-hungry bad guys, in the complete ignorance that they are, in real life, crazy-eyed power-hungry bad guys.

The one bizarre contrivance that does meet with my full approval is the women's variant of wrestling, whereby two very nubile young ladies tear at each tooth and nail in order to expose as much breast and bottom flesh as the American broadcasting networks will reasonably allow. It makes for intellectual and stimulating viewing, I find.



Many, many satirists have written better than me about wrestling while all managing to ignore one fatal aspect. What is the earthly point of sending-up a form of 'sports entertainment' (and I use those words UNBELIEVABLY loosely) that has been parodying itself for ten years now?

Scoring

There isn't any. I'm not sure there are even any rules any more

Royal Golf Rumble

Probably the most watchable of the wrestling events is that oddity known as the Royal Rumble, whereby 30 of the fellas attempt to hurl each other out of the wrestling ring. Perhaps more entertaining was – around 1997 – the scriptwriters noticing that they had already incorporated literally every plot twist into this format that they could think of, and having to go around again.

The golfing version is a Wolf-style MoP. The mat is soft and slippery beneath your feet (Soft/Fast greens), and the gusty booing from the crowd will be unpredictable. Conditions are tough, and the stakes will increase every hole, up to \$18,000 on offer. The wrestling commissioners have banned big hefty weapons at ringside, so unfortunately that will be all your wooden clubs out of play.

Allegiances are notoriously tenuous in the Royal Rumble, so the player On The Ropes (the Wolf) can try to play in tandem with another golfer or go it alone and hope not to be eliminated. Anything could happen...

Hints and Tips

- Tough greens would be a definite no-no. Take on Valderrama, Worksop or Wentworth for a fair challenge.
- Playing Solo will net you double the cash for a hole, but obviously it is much harder to beat three other players on your own.
- Over-hit your approaches – these green conditions relish backspin.
- Par 5s could well be where the game is won and lost. If you stand even a smidgen of a chance of hitting the green with two 1-iron shots, you must go for it.

Par Score

£50,000 to £60,000 should be enough for the win.

Basketball

Background

When a tall, lanky, goofy kid goes to a British high school, he gets bullied and told to join a freakshow. Teachers are so cruel these days. When a tall, lanky, goofy kid goes to an American high school, he becomes a sporting hero simply by being able to tower over everyone else. Ball-handling and pace take second place to having huge hands and the ability to wear enormous shorts and Bling without looking like an idiot.

Later in life, Mr Lanky will spend roughly an hour a week on a basketball court and rake in ten million bucks a year. Genetics can be very selective.

Basketball is the USA's third sport, and – like baseball – is hardly taken seriously anywhere else. Any sport that threw up a circus troupe that toured the world and played their sport to music while wearing stripy outfits is worthy of derision. You can't imagine a London Irish Globetrotters playing rugby like that now, can you? While I'm on the subject, can somebody please explain to me the phenomenon of piped organ music at basketball? It's fairly full of action and movement compared to baseball: I wouldn't have thought it needs jazzing up.



Like baseball, basketball is only played by schoolgirls in the UK. They call it netball, but there's no dribbling allowed. Much is made of the dimples on a basketball: for example, if the basketball was a scale model of the Earth, then Mount Everest would be smaller than one dimple. And other such bumf.

Americans hate to be reminded that a game so key to their culture was invented by a Canadian. So I think I'll do so again. No, wait a minute: I just have!

Scoring

Not a tricky one this. Over the length of 4 twelve-minute quarters, 5 players attempt to stick the ball into the basket at the other end. Substitutions are rife, back and forth, and the average player spends less than half the match on the court.

If one scores from within the arc, it's 2 points: outside is 3 points. Players will be aiming to pick up fouls through physical contact so that they can pick up free throws on top of their score. Each free throw scores a single point.

SlamDunk Golf (2 players)

SlamDunk is played over a number of holes of the users' choice, but scores will turn out quite low if only 18 holes are played. For the most realistic score, players are advised to play over 4 'quarters' of 9 holes each.

The basketball court is medium pace; so are the greens. You have only five clubs, but a generous set of Mulligans to represent the frequent substitutions.

Quite simply, a Par is equivalent to a 2-pointer; a birdie or eagle is a 3-pointer. However, you can pick up fouls by chipping in for birdie or by scrambling par after being in the sand (1 Free Throw); alternatively, by visiting water or OB on your way to Par (2 Free Throws). Be warned: bogeys score nothing!

Hints and Tips

- This MoP plays well on most courses, but check that the greens are relatively friendly. Hawksmoor Heath, Shenandoah Ridge and Harbour Town all play well. If you think the 'OB and Par' score is unrealistic, try Rocky Nuts!
- If you are playing a 4-quarter game, why not theme them? 4 David Meader courses, 4 Australian courses, or 4 fantasy courses would make a brilliant themed contest.
- You can be braver here, thanks to the merit attached to your recovery play. If your sand game is good, you could even miss the greens deliberately to try and pick up the foul.
- Fairway bunkers are sometimes a good option, but remember a lot of your approach clubs are out of play.
- Collect your par on the short holes and move on without trying anything fancy.
- Punish your opponent's mistakes by collecting a safe par and stretching your lead.

Par Score

Scores will be unlikely to tip 25 points per quarter. Settle for 80 points for a victory.

Solo

Background

Old ladies are bridge players by habit, but when the strain of having to be nice to each other gets too much, they settle for a game of Solo. Without having to go into excessive detail about trumps and so forth, they bid to win as many tricks ('sets of four cards', if you like) as possible, either against all of the other three or working in tandem.

If you know an old lady, I suggest you get out more in the fresh air. We haven't time to be wasting with this nonsense!

...or have we? After all, golfers frequently 'bid' to outscore the other players, and the degree of gambling involved in deciding whether you can match your bid or not makes for some interesting and novel strategy.



Scoring

For playing Solo, earn ten points. For playing solo and garnering the majority of tricks (an 'Abundance') – 30 points. A misere is about as depressing as it sounds, but nevertheless will earn you 20 points for not winning a single trick. To do this open-handed will earn you double. The ultimate goal, as in bridge, is Slam: winning 12 or 13 tricks will garner you 60 points.

Solo Golf (4 players)

Park yourself at the card table (that fuzzy top looks Medium/Soft to me) with three other ladies (yes – Ladies tees! Swallow your pride!) and bid to make your best putt. This one is all about your greens play. You are bidding to sink as long a putt as possible while still outscoring the opposition. Ties will count, so you could ‘propose’ an alliance with another player – that’s where things get really devious!

Solo	10 Points	Best score and sink a putt of more than 5 feet
Misere	20 Points	Best score and sink a putt of more than 10 feet
Abundance	30 Points	Best score and sink a putt of more than 15 feet
Spread Misere	40 Points	Best score and sink a putt of more than 20 feet
Slam	60 Points	Best score and sink a putt of more than 30 feet

Hints and Tips

- Because this is all about the putting, drag out the two classic putting courses: Tillicum Putting and Desert Canyon. Putting will add a slant to the gameplay and really make every shot count.
- It goes without saying that if your putting game is at all weak, avoid this MoP like the plague!
- If you know a course has tough greens, don’t gamble with distance – play your best and hope for the top-scores.
- Good fairway position is still crucial on many well-designed courses.
- Attack the hole from on the green. If you are aggressive and miss, you may get a consolation score when a gimme would not net anything. Likewise, chip-ins are pointless.
- A bit of a breeze could help instead of hinder by setting up a slightly longer points-scoring putt.
- Don’t be scared to proposition (oo-er!) your fellow players. This game will not work without a modicum of collaboration and backstabbing!

Par Score

120 points would see you doing well.

Super Mario Bros.

Background

OK, again, I'm pushing my luck by counting a computer game as organised sport. But the console industry is a major part of today's leisure market, and if you've seen the Youtube clip with a crowd of pale, sweaty computer programmers cheering on two of their number to complete the game in the shortest amount of time, you'd possibly mistake it for some kind of sporting activity.

Super Mario first had his origins as the hero in the 1980s Donkey Kong handheld game. His leap to success on the Nintendo Entertainment System set the standard for platform games and is the basis for the scoring of the Links version of the game.



Over the years, Mario has played quite a few sports of his own, including Tennis, Karting and some strange game called golf. Now, we take things the other way – and golf can play Mario. Revenge is sweet.



It's never been adequately explained why Japanese programmers chose an Italian plumber as a pixelated cult hero for a whole generation. Certainly, we've never seen him take three hours to fit a washing machine, arrive five days after he told us, or reveal his butt crack while his head is in the toilet. Now that's a computer game we'd all like to see!

Scoring

The scoring of the Super Mario Bros game was fairly academic compared to actually completing the game and defeating the evil Bowser. It was a complicated mix afforded by killing bad guys by jumping on them, collecting coins and finishing levels. Scores into the millions could be achieved by about 15 minutes' play. Hopefully, my version is a bit simpler...

Super Mario Golf (1-2 players)

Play alone, or take your companion Luigi with you – either way there'll be no wind (when did you last see wind in the Mushroom Kingdom, eh?). Each hole you complete represents the defeat of one bad guy, with points awarded as in the original game.

Bogie (or worse)	-	Goomba Kill (100 points)
Par	-	Koopa Kill (200 points)
Birdie	-	Piranha Plant Kill (500 points)
Eagle	-	Bullet Bill Kill (1000 points)
Double Eagle	-	Hammer Bros Kill (2000 points)
Hole In One	-	Bowser Kill (5000 points)

There are two power-ups available on each hole. Hitting the fairway off the tee will grant you the Super Mario Mushroom (10 points) which will double your score for the hole, and hitting the Green In Regulation will grant you the Fireball Flower (20 points) which will treble your score. It is possible to 'jump' straight to fireball power without getting the super mushroom first.

You can also lose lives by hitting the sand or water and missing par. If you lose five lives then you should forfeit the entire game, but there is no way for the MoP to keep track of this, so you'll have to be honest!

Hints and Tips

- Something relatively straightforward would be the key to making those high-scoring kills. Brown Deer Park, Kauri Cliffs, Leven Scoonie or Lagalochan Bay all yield Eagle chances. Courses with hard-to-hit greens, such as Pine Dunes or Whitewebbs are also good.
- The Power-ups are key, so play fairways and greens, and change down off the tee if necessary.
- Highlight-reel shots count for very little: think like the pros when approached with a heroic option.
- If you've got time, why not play this across many 'worlds' (ie. Courses) and see how far your five lives can take you?

Par Score

Sensible play will see you looking at around 12,000 points.

Golf

Background

You what?! I'm not speling on at length about this! You're a Links player, dammit! If you're not, heaven knows why you're reading this.

Instead, a few words on how this MoP arose. This is a bit different to the rest of the set in that it doesn't use the scoring of the sport in question. Obviously. If you wanted golf scoring, you'd just play Strokeplay, wouldn't you?

No, this game came to be from a hypothetical conversation on Links Corner involving which three golfers, if you could combine their 'specialist' attributes, you would merge to make the perfect dream golfer. This generally led to lists such as



- Driving: Daly
- Irons/Recovery: Seve
- Putting: Faxon

...with various other fripperies such as the 'psychological game' thrown in from time to time. This led Ian D (former Big Boss of LC) to propose a simple Par scoring system, as detailed on the next page. Not only did I recognise this as a potential (if not particularly riveting) MoP, but a chance to put our theories into practice, especially if somebody could develop accurate enough computer anis.

Update: the computer anis are with us! Thanks to the sterling work of Frank C, there is a mounting list of realistic ANI settings at both Links Corner and apcd-courses. Thanks Frank!



Superstars of Golf (1-8 players)

Ian D's grand golfing formula was a fair bit simpler than the average set of PGA statistics:

- X: 1 point for driving the fairway
- Y: 1 point for hitting GIR
- Z: 1 point for every putt

Then a 'dream' golfer's ability can be calculated with $X+Y-Z$

And that's precisely what this MoP does, with the slight proviso that taking more than 3 putts will cost you a flat 5 points. But that shouldn't happen too often, should it?

To try and standardise this as much as possible, the conditions are toughened up (Gusty, Medium, Fast and Back tees) and all players will use a prescribed (full) set of clubs. Gimmes and Mulligans are strictly forbidden.

Hints and Tips

- Any course will do, although you might want to avoid the toughest greens. Why not use this as an opportunity to dig out a tournament or fictional classic: Gleneagles, Colonial or Crooked Creek?
- Your score is completely unimportant: this is all about golfing skills. Attack the course!
- Long putts on difficult greens can become an unnecessary waste of points. Dig out the chipper and aim for the fringe.
- This MoP was the only one designed to assess computer Anis against each other too: recreate your favourite Pro golfers' stats and see how they square off against each other.

Par Score

'Good golf' would theoretically be represented by anything higher than zero. Under these conditions, I suspect that actually a score closer to -10 would be likely.

Jousting

Background

The Film *A Knight's Tale* is rarely far away from the DVD player in my house, although that's probably because my missus has a thumping crush on Heath Ledger. Anyway, certainly the oldest sport in this collection, jousting is a simple one-on-one contest between two knights on horseback. Dressing up in unfathomable colours and ridiculously heavy suits of armour, they gallop at each other along either side of a wooden fence (the 'tilt') and try to break - yes actually shatter - wooden lances on each other. The Queensbury Rules did not really apply.

Nowadays, all this dangerous business is of course frowned on, and jousters tend to be the sort of beard-and-glasses gentleman who enjoys historical battle recreations and drinking real ale. Knights are almost certainly not involved, and if they were it is unlikely that the likes of the British nobility would participate. They're all too busy fox-hunting – keep an eye out soon for the Fox Hunting MoP!



Scoring

Because jousting was never a worldwide sport (in fairness, most of the competing barons were busy trying to conquer, rape and pillage at the same time), there was never standardised scoring. Scraping together what I can find from various computer games and one well-known film, however, I gather the following would not be considered unrealistic:

3 Unhorsing opponent with a lance break

3 Breaking lance on lance tip

3 Breaking a lance on an opponent's head.

2 Breaking a lance on an opponent's body

1 Partly breaking a lance

-1 Breaking a lance on hitting saddle

-1 Failure to present self as target (horse swerves, etc)

-2 Hitting the tilt once with lance

-3 Hitting the tilt twice with lance

Take Your Lances (2 players)

This is an unusual MoP in that your final score on a hole is not really significant. What jousting is all about is brute strength, out-manoeuving and out-thinking your opponent. Each hole actually consists of an entire jousting match, so you might want to score up matchplay-style.

3 (Unhorsing) – hole out first

-1 (Saddle) – hit a tree

3 (Lance Tip) – closest to hole (all on green)

-1 (Swerve) – hit OB

3 (Head Shot) – longest drive in fairway

-2 (Hit tilt) – hit sand

2 (Body Shot) – first player on green

-3 (Hit tilt again) – hit from sand to sand

1 (Part-break) – Fewest number of putts

The ground underfoot is soft and squishy, and you have a choice of five lances (or clubs) to add to your trusty putter. Gimmes are disallowed because being the first to hole out is a crucial points-winner.

Hints and Tips

- Saxon Vale would be the romantically ideal course, but any course with strong risk-reward is perfect. Bay Hill, Bushido Gardens and Babylon Ridge are suitably mad enough.
- This MoP is the gambler's dream. Because your score is unimportant, you can pull all the stops out and not fear the consequences.
- As with the other 'tactical' MoPs (particularly football, Aussie Rules and bowls), you want to consider all the advantages of teeing off second in order to maximise your score. It is quite possible to outscore your opponent but still tee off second on the next hole because your unimportant 'golfing' score is higher.
- Using different tees is an intriguing handicap system.
- It's better to drive long and later chip inside your opponent's ball.
- Unusually, the sand is a much bigger enemy than the water. Take all your chances over the lakes, but avoid the bunkers at all costs.

Par Score

The weird and wonderful scoring isn't easy to predict or calculate, but you should be proud of exceeding 100 points, I reckon.

Cricket

Background

If you know the rules to cricket, chances are that you don't need to read this. If you don't know the rules to cricket, chances are that you're American. So, for the 9,000th time in print, I present 'Cricket For Americans'...

The teams toss a coin to decide who goes in and who doesn't go in. Both teams go in and then the team that is not in comes out. Nine men from the team that is in stay in but the other two come out. The team that is not in tries to get all of the team that is in, out, starting with the two men who are out. A man can be out if he is bowled out, caught out, run out, leg-before-wicket, or out in a number of other ways that don't happen very often. When a man is out, he goes in and another man from the team that is in comes out. When all but one of the team that is in are out then everybody goes in and changes



over. This means that the team who were all out are now not in and the team that weren't in (the ones who all went out first) are now in. The team who were in first, but are now all out, all go out first and the team who were not in first send two of their men out. The team who were in first now try to get all (but one) of the men in the team that were not in first, out, before the team who are now in (that is to say, not the team that are all out now or were all out before) beat the score of the team that were in first. You will notice that a team can be all out but never all in, which is a type of wrestling, except during lunch.

There. Is that clear now?

In all seriousness, I won't make any attempt to explain the Laws of Cricket here. It would just take way too long. Suffice to say that you need to know that a chap tries to hit a ball with a plank of wood in order to score 'runs', and that there are ten different ways to get out, which makes for several hackneyed British pub quiz questions.

Scoring

Again, the full ramifications of the scoring system would just take more than this space allows, and that's without having to explain the difference between Test Matches, ODIs, First-Class County matches and the like. Let's try and keep it simple, shall we?

If a player wallops the ball to the boundary, he automatically scores 4 runs.

If a player wallops the ball to the boundary *without it bouncing*, he automatically scores 6 runs.

If the two 'in' players complete 'lengths' running between the two wickets while the fielders are collecting the ball, they score 1 run for each length. Normally 1-3 runs are scored this way.

A team has 10 'outs'. There are 11 players, and two must be in at the same time.

Test Match (1-8 players)

OK, you won't be playing a full match. You will be batting for 3 overs (which happens to be 18 balls – convenient, huh?) on what we call a 'slow turner' of a pitch (Moderate/Slow greens). Mulligans are strictly forbidden – no second chances against this bowler!

Scoring Eagle gets you 6 runs; scoring birdie counts for 4 runs.

You can score 1 run simply by making Par. If you visit a bunker on the way, you will score an additional run via a misfield.

2 or 3 runs are made with the high-risk strategy of making Bogey or better after hitting the water or OB. If you manage to scramble Par after these penalty-shot hazards, you get that extra run on top.

Bonus runs are scored for No Balls (2 runs) or Wides (1 run) if you chip in. It is added to your runs on the hole.

Beware! Scoring double bogey or worse means a wicket has been taken and 5 runs deducted from your tally (this does not happen in real life!)

It's also possible to play Test Match in pairs – after all, there are normally 2 batsmen out there. You'll play Ryder Cup-style doubles in a passable imitation of alternating ends between overs. All other scores are the same.

Hints and Tips

- Take on the tough courses with this one. Slainte Mhath, Schloss Hohenfels, Pebble Beach or Shinnecock Hills would be good.
- Be super-aggressive off the tee. The better chance you give yourself with your approach, the more you'll score. This is the only MOP that rewards over-par scores.
- If you don't think you can make birdie, the fringe is the best place you can be, because it's easy to get up and down for a run.
- Taking chances with greenside bunkers will often pay off if escapes are easy. Likewise, playing for the water is – unusually – a good strategy.
- Remember there's a very fine line between birdie and bogey; gambling a bit too often will ruin your score.
- This is a very interesting MoP when played Pairs with players on each team playing from different tees.

Par Score

Scores of 30 or more would rank among the best.

Poker

Background

The 'cool' sport of the 21st Century, Poker has stepped up from late-night entertainment and sleazy Vegas sideshow to internet phenomenon and high-rolling earner.

Poker suddenly became a staple in home games worldwide, confusing many Americans, who had been doing this for years, and twice as many old ladies, who assumed they had come round for a nice game of bridge.

This of course is nothing compared to the online poker phenomenon which abandons the pretence of poker being purely about personality and psychology, merely reducing it to a way to max out your credit card as quickly as possible.



Abandoning the Wild West game of 5-card Draw, the modern game is exclusively Texas Hold-em, which allows a greater psychological element and more personality at the table, as five cards of every seven are on view. Frankly, though, the participants look very pale and sweaty: I think they need to get out more and play some golf...

Scoring

I won't patronise anyone with a going-over of the rank of the poker hands. Besides, it's not necessary to understand the Texas Golf-Em MoP.

The mechanics are pretty simple. You start off with two hidden 'pocket' cards. There's a bit of betting. Three cards, face-up are dealt to the middle of the table (the 'flop'). They are shared by all the players who have not dropped out. There's some more betting. Another single card is dealt face up next to the flop (the 'turn'). The turn card is also shared by the remaining 'in' players. The final card (the 'river') is dealt face up with the other four. Each player uses the best five of the seven cards on display to make up their poker hand. There's some more betting...

The score is all cash-related. You bet what you can afford and score what you win or lose. Couldn't be simpler, could it?

Texas Golf-Em (2-8 players)

With trembling fingers you turn over your two concealed cards in a million dollar game. What do you see? Two clubs.

That's right: you are about to bet a fortune on your golf game with just two clubs in your bag – a putter and one of your choice. At these stakes, you are strictly at Champ level, but you can have 5 Mulligans, representing 'folded' hands. The caddy is off – club selection shouldn't be a problem!

And you've got 18 hands to play...

The basic scoring:

- Best score (or tied) on a hole = \$+10,000
- Worst score (or tied) on a hole = \$-8,000
- Chipping in for bogey or worse = \$+5,000 (hitting the flop – sorry!)
- Hit water and scramble bogey or better = \$+3,000 (a pair on the river – sorry!)
- Saving par after being in the sand = \$+2,000 (a consolation pair on the turn)

OK...so I've jazzed it up a bit to stop the backmarkers losing interest. But, at the end of the day, it's winner takes all. Play with 8 people and there can only be one winner. But it's most fun that way.

Hints and Tips

- For the sake of your sanity, play a course that is pretty short and allows you a decent shot at birdie. I'd recommend Wagga Wagga, Edgbaston and Dullatur.
- Take a 6- or 7-iron and put in some work at The Complex first. There's money at stake, dammit!
- Don't use F/F greens unless you have a sadistic streak.
- Use flops and punches to get the best out of your single club.
- Avoid the bunkers at all costs. Recovery shots with a 5-iron are not pretty.
- Your Mulligans are best used for a second go at chip-ins.
- Don't aim for the 'consolation' bonuses. Just get down in as few shots as possible and get the hell to the next tee.

Par Score

Because there's only one winner, whoever is in pocket by the end of the round will have done enough. Their score? Could be nearly anything, but somewhere between \$300,000-500,000 is normal for larger fields.

Pentathlon

Background

The ancient pentathlon was a rite of nobility: a test of man's extreme strength; a competition that demanded the utmost in skill and ability.

Today, it would appear, the sport has been cobbled together from people who aren't quite good enough to enter the Olympics for anything else.

So, last night, I walked into my local bar and asked: "Okay, guys. Who's up for some shooting, swimming, horse riding, fencing and running?"

Most of the clientele expressed strong interest in the first one, but not so much in the last four. Yet in 1912, these were thought to be the five spirits that emboldened modern man, or some such guff.



The pentathlon is, in reality, a gruelling event that takes superb athletes. Even in teams, all team members have to enter for at least four events. So it's no use fielding a team of one-sport specialists.

The Tunisian debut in Summer Pentathlon, 1960, has almost been entirely discredited because of the poor standard of the team. Only one member could ride a horse, not many of them could jump in the swimming pool without half-drowning, and only one could fence with any degree of competence. In the latter case a competitor realised he was facing the same Tunisian for the third consecutive time and sadly had the team disqualified, to the disappointment of sporting duffers everywhere,

Scoring

Unexpectedly, the worlds of pentathlon and golf collide in that they both have a Par score. In golf, it's 72; in pentathlon it's 1,000. Big difference. A good tournament Par score can therefore be expected to be 5,000 (one thousand per event)

Obviously, one's score can exceed or dip below the 'standard grand' depending on one's performance in the five different disciplines.

The Golfing Pentathlon (1-8 players) (4-8 players in Team variant)

The five disciplines are Driving, Approach, Recovery, Putting and Score. Mulligans are forbidden; all other variants are up to you.

Just like the real thing, I've tried to keep 1000 as a par score.

Driving

- Hit the fairway – 1200
- Miss the fairway – 800
- Longest fairway drive – 200 point bonus
- Longest overall drive – 50 point bonus
- OB Tee Shot – 200 point penalty
- Par 3, within 10 feet – 1300
- Par 3, within 30 feet – 1000
- Par 3, within 99 feet – 700

Approach

- Green in Regulation – 1200
- Green missed in Regulation – 800

Recovery

- Rough and scramble par – 50 point bonus
- Rough and miss par – 100 point penalty
- Water and scramble par – 300 point bonus
- Water and miss par – 500 point penalty
- Sand and scramble par – 100 point bonus
- Sand and miss par – 250 point penalty
- Chip-in – 400 point bonus (plus 1000 putting points)

Putting

- 1-putt – 1150 points
- 2-putt – 1000 points
- 3-putt (or more) – 750 points

Score

- Eagle or better – 1500 points
- Birdie – 1200 points
- Par – 1000 points
- Bogey – 700 points
- Double Bogey or worse – 500 points

The Par score is 4000 per hole (not 5000 because the Recovery bonus/penalty cannot be guaranteed for every player on every hole), although you should aim much greater at teams.

The teams version is 'Scramble'-style: consistency among all players in your team will be the key to victory, and it might be a little harder to clock the Par score on every hole.

Hints and Tips

- The score is complicated but the conditions are your own. Pick your favourite course and conditions and try out against yourself or another player. Some of my favourites are Crystal Pines, Kanaal New Course and Rugged Dune.
- Be ultra-aggressive and just aim to be your best with every shot. There's no better strategy here.
- At teams, all the emphasis is on all players driving well and staying out of the hazards.

Par Score

72,000 or higher would represent consistently great golf; a little harder, the more players you have.

Darts

Background

In pubs up and down the world, fat men in baggy shirts lean worryingly over one foot, extend a muscly, tattooed arm, and fling dubious pseudo-arrows into a board stuffed with horsehair. Darts is the ultimate working man's sport because it requires minimal exercise and maximal beer consumption in order to play with any degree of competence. Even if you're a heavy drinker, try teeing off after four pints, and you'll want to go back to darts.

Heralded recently as a sport that might revive the paralysed mathematical skills of today's juvenile cabbages, darts has undergone a 'professional' refurbishment whereby players are forbidden from drinking onstage and encouraged to have entrance music *a la* WWE wrestling.



If this continues, then British darts will be dead as we know it. Already, there are disturbing signs of being taken over by keen-eyed, slim Dutch and Germans. Oddly enough, this is one sport we don't mind the Aussies winning at: they at least understand the value of a few pints and a beer gut.

British darts has one remaining saviour, the eccentric – yet classically educated – commentator, Sid Waddell. Anyone who has heard a monstrous Geordie accent saying: "Under that heart of stone beats muscles of pure flint" or "this lad has more checkouts than Tesco's" knows in their heart that this is the only true darts voice. Legend has it that he does 9-ball pool too!

Scoring

The dartboard is divided into twenty segments, each one scoring between 1 and 20 (in a fixed but not consecutive order). There is a ring outside the segments which counts double for that segment (ie. Double 18 scores 36) and a ring halfway in which scores treble (ie. Treble 9 scores 27). The centre circle (or 'Bull') is divided into 2: the outer Bull scores 25, and the inner Bull scores 50. The inner Bull also counts as a double.

It should be obvious that players aim habitually for treble 20 – the highest score on the board. Unfortunately, this segment is neighboured by 5 and 1, so the risks tend to be great.

Normal darts matches start at a score of 501 and count down from there, insisting that a player always finish with an exact double.

Treble Top Golf (1-8 players)

You take on the back oche (the throwing line, pronounced 'ockey') which means the back tees. There is no wind (that can affect your darts badly) and no Mulligans, but the other conditions are up to you.

You won't be playing down from 501 (sadly the game engine prevents that). You'll simply be competing for the highest possible score. There are 3 darts per hole, and the maximum 180 will be achieved by playing flawlessly.

To score a Treble 20	- Hit the fairway with your drive - Hit the green in regulation - One-putt for birdie or better - Drive to within 20ft of the flag on a Par 3
To Score a Treble 19	- Chip in for birdie or better
To score a Treble 18	- Two-putt for birdie after hitting the green under regulation
To score a Single 20	- Miss the fairway with your drive - Drive to within 33 yards of the flag on a Par 3 - Score a Par exactly
To score a Single 5	- Miss the green in regulation
To score a Treble 1	- Score a bogey
To score a Single 1	- Score a double bogey or worse

Hints and Tips

- Open, links-style courses are good for this Mode, played solo. Sarazen Links, Quidnet and Ballylecum Castle would all be prime candidates. With opponents, you might want something with strategic fairways and approach shots; try Brydestone or Oklahoma Crossings.
- The old golfing cliché 'Fairways And Greens' holds very true here. The rewards are big; the penalties afforded by hazards relatively harmless.
- Play the conditions to your advantage. If your opponents are weak putters, set the greens to F/F.
- Going round in solid single-20s will not win anything; take your chances from the fairway.

Par Score

The best darts players like to average 100 per turn; you should aim a bit higher. 2000 points would represent some very good golf.

Tennis

Background

Big strapping Swedish men, butch grunting women and frilly knickers all go to show that sometimes there's a very fine dividing line between tennis and adult movies. Tennis continues to be unstintingly popular among rich inadequate fathers and the British middle-classes, despite apparently being the slowest-moving and most boring sport on TV. If it weren't for the 1990's influx of improbably pretty Russian girls into the sport then I suspect it might have died out altogether.

Tennis aficionados tend to walk around with enormous bags containing eight or nine rackets, the weight of which amounts to a similar amount of exercise to playing the game, which they only do for two games at a time before sitting down and having a rest and a banana. On which point, what happened to lemon barley water at Wimbledon? It used to only ever be drunk by Jeremy Bates and my Nan...never see it nowadays.

British sport is typically measured by their inability to produce a world-class tennis player. This will shortly be replaced by their inability to produce a cricket team with



a rudimentary grasp of tactics or their inability to field two football strikers who don't resemble outcasts from Jim Henson's workshop. Even despite our country's inherent ineptitude, millions still queue around the block to get into Wimbledon every July, only to receive the inevitable disappointment of a fortnight of rain and a grisly celebrity appearance by Cliff Richard. When you factor in £15 for a punnet of strawberries, it makes an afternoon and a few pints in front of a cricket match look reassuringly normal, I reckon.



Scoring

Much has been written about the oddball 15-30-40 scoring system, the origins of 'love' and 'deuce' in the depths of the French language, and the abolition of the second serve. None of that here.

Tennis is scored in matches, which are made up of sets, which in turn are made up of games. The sport doesn't like players winning by 'just one', so relies frequently on tie-breaks or having to go round and play the whole infuriating thing again *ad infinitum*.

WimbleGolf (1 player)

Breezy, and medium-speed grass are hallmarks of Wimbledon. Apart from the rain, of course.

Last and quite possibly least, this MoP took a while to wrangle out as the tennis scoring system refused to be manipulated into Links. You have to imagine yourself up against an imaginary opponent, and you start each hole Love-40 down. There's no way of scoring up a game at a time, so the Game bonus awards you an extra ten points on top of the required 40. Each hole, therefore, has a maximum of 50 points, or 60 if you hit the Par 5 in two.

All your points are cumulative throughout the round. Not terribly realistic, I'm afraid. As soon as you fail to score the point, your opponent wins, and you cease scoring for the hole, so miss the GIR and it's just 15 points for you.

15-40	Hit the fairway from the tee, or to within 30 feet on a Par 3.
30-40	Hit the Green In Regulation.
Deuce	Lag your first putt short of the hole.
Advantage	Score a par exactly after lagging. No gimmies, so make sure that second putt goes in.
Game	Score a birdie without having to lag a putt. You can't score Game or Advantage unless you make the GIR.

Score bogey, or worse, and you should expect nothing

Hints and Tips

- Take a course with reasonably steady greens. Prairie Dog, Fontana and Kill Devil Hills will all be tolerable. A south-western course with lots of cross-fairway drives will be more of a challenge.
- This MoP is good for neutralising weaknesses. If your putting isn't great, you can still score well from your tee and approach shots.
- The decision you make on the green will be worth a lot of points. Do you lag for a safe 40 points or risk missing the birdie putt for only 30 points? The decisions are even more crucial on Par 3s where you can drop back to 15 points.
- Check out the greens before your approach. Trying to lag a downhill putt on a slippery green is a nightmare

Par Score

400 wouldn't be at all bad. It's easier to score pars than you think when you play safe.