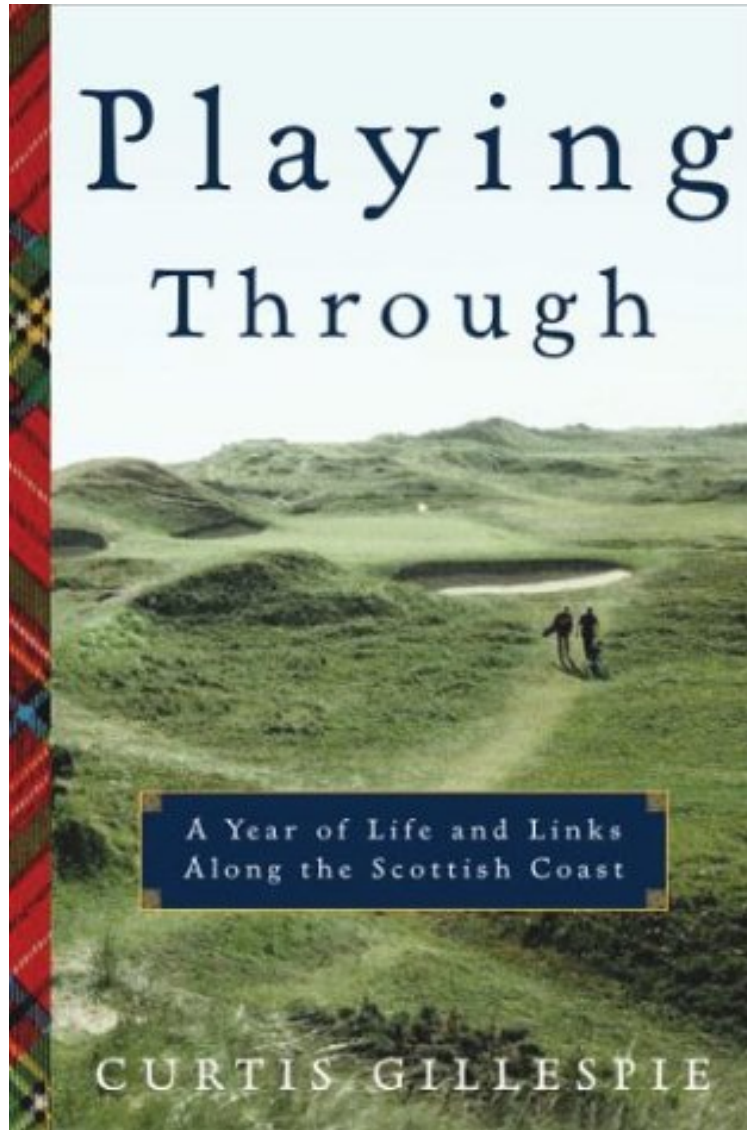


[FREE] Playing Through: A Year of Life and Links Along the Scottish Coast

Playing Through: A Year of Life and Links Along the Scottish Coast

Curtis Gillespie

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Curtis Gillespie : Playing Through: A Year of Life and Links Along the Scottish Coast before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Playing Through: A Year of Life and Links Along the Scottish Coast:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not Just about GolfBy JD44I picked this up at the library searching for books about golfing in Scotland for an upcoming trip. What I found was a book that was about much more than golf. The author did a great job going back and forth between his time in Scotland and memories of his father. While I

would have loved to read more about the golf courses, I thoroughly enjoyed the tales of his father, friends in Scotland, and the innocence of his young children. A great read for anyone, not just lovers of golf...and I really want to play Gullane!
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Who cares
By Chris O'Day
Don't care about his life story, title leads to believe the book is about golf. The golf portions weren't even good.

In this lyrical, evocative, and heartfelt memoir, Curtis Gillespie chronicles the year he spent with his wife and daughters in quaint Gullane, Scotland. Against the backdrop of a uniquely beautiful landscape, Gillespie deftly explores the bonds of fatherhood and friendship, and the irresistible lure of links golf. When Curtis Gillespie first played a round in Gullane, he was a graduate student on the golf team at the University of St. Andrews. He wrote to his father back in Canada about the unmatched peacefulness and loveliness of the place and promised that the two of them would golf there together someday. After his father passed away before they could play the Scottish course, Gillespie vowed to return himself. Thirteen years after his first visit, Gillespie uproots his wife and two young daughters and moves to Gullane, hoping to learn something about himself, and his life, in the process. Early on Gillespie teams up with two aging local golfers named Archie and Jack (members at Gullane Golf Club for more than a century between them), and the ensuing friendship that blossoms between the elderly Scotsmen and the young Canadian infuses *Playing Through* with a sense of enchanting familiarity and easygoing charm. Gillespie samples courses like Muirfield and St. Andrews under the delightfully gruff guidance of Archie and Jack, soaks up the natural beauty of the countryside, and sets out to capture the full flavor of village life, haggis and all. The gregarious and eccentric locals, the stunning setting, the town's history, and even his family's response to their new life all converge in a warm, wonderful story rich with comedy and insight. Skillfully interwoven through the narrative are anecdotes about Gillespie's much-missed father, an ordinary man who inspired extraordinary love from his son. And though his father is not there to share in Gullane's charms, the experience of moving to the village and coming to know its inhabitants helps Gillespie through an unexpected passage of discovery about his father, himself, and his own journey through fatherhood.

From Publishers Weekly
In a book that is part golf travelogue and part mushy memoir, Gillespie (*The Progress of an Object in Motion; Someone Like That*) uproots his family from their home in Edmonton, Canada, and moves to the coast of Scotland for a year to write and hit the links. Stitching together random memories, quaint observations on Scottish life, tributes to his deceased father, tidy domestic homilies and a sprinkling of golf yarns, Gillespie wanders across time and space, and generally gets entangled in the thicket of his own solipsism. Although he is intermittently humorous, charming and even moving, his earnest sentimentality smothers most of the book's touching moments and gives his anecdotes a manufactured, too-perfect quality. The most redeeming passages involve Gillespie's frequent golf partners, two crusty old men named Jack and Archie whose grouchy, plainspoken banter supplies a welcome respite. Although the writing is easygoing, there are some forced metaphors and a few genuine clunkers: "my tee shot, which had been little more than five yards off the fairway, had gone into an area of rough that seemed to be the site of some deeply twisted agricultural experiment to develop strains of vegetation that had learned to tie their stalks in knots." Readers looking for a book about golf or Scotland may be disappointed. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.
From Booklist
Another Canadian writer has done what every introspective golfer dreams of doing: traipsing off to Scotland for an extended stay in an idyllic village near a classic links golf course. Like his friend and colleague Lorne Rubenstein, whose *Season in Dornoch* (2001) is one of the finest of golf memoirs, Gillespie, too, lugged golf clubs and computer to the Scottish linksland, landing at Gullane, where he, his wife, and their young daughter spent a year folding themselves into the ebb and flow of village life. Along with the expected profiles of village eccentrics and recollections of near-perfect moments on the links, Gillespie devotes much of his attention to remembering his father--a stern, demanding man but one who left an indelible mark on his son. In *Final Rounds* (1996), James Dodson describes a golfing trip to Scotland with his dying father; Gillespie never made that trip with his father, but golf and Scotland become, nevertheless, the catalysts that allow him to erase the emotional distance that separated father and son in life. A moving personal story and a treat for armchair golfers and travelers. Bill Ott
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"Gillespie's rendering of the events reminds me of Joe Fiorito's final days with his father in *The Closer We are to Dying*. I cried while I read that book, and Gillespie had me doing the same thing... This is a crossover book in the best sense of the genre. Golfers will find much to admire in Gillespie's descriptions of the game's "ark of the covenant" in Gullane and other courses in the area. And non-golfers will see a reporter's eye for detail and a novelist's skill for dramatic storytelling. But what might be ignored amid the fluidity of the writing is Gillespie's beautifully realized skill as a memoirist. This is writing thick with detail and dense with introspection..." -- Calgary Herald
"Playing Through is one of those special books that comes along only about as often as your favorite links course appears on the Open Rota -- an elegiac tribute to life's most wonderful and complex game and the enduring bonds it creates, a beautifully rendered meditation on what it means to be a good son, a loving father, and lasting friend of the game. If I could recommend but one book this year -- this would be it." -- James Dodson, author of *Final Rounds*
"Curtis Gillespie is a beautiful writer, with an exquisite

touch reminiscent of John Updike. He can describe the ephemera of the natural world and the fragility of human relationships with the same sure hand. *Playing Through* is a book about golf, history, friendship and the love of family; it is compelling and evocative and memorable in the very best sense.” -- Alistair MacLeod