



A WEE NIP

TM

Newsletter of the Society of Hickory Golfers • Autumn 2015 • www.hickorygolfers.com





Livingston playset to be displayed at Kingsley Club



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Ralph S. Livingston III, one of the early pioneers of modern hickory golf, was a staunch advocate of play with original clubs, especially his beloved Tom Stewarts. After his death in August 2012, Livingston's personal playset was donated to his club, the Kingsley Club, in Kingsley, Mich. Rather than see them sit in a bag in the corner, Livingston's friend and fellow Kingsley member Chris Hufnagel of Rockford, Mich., fashioned a display from stained oak and a rich leather backdrop. He created the display and plaque to honor Livingston and his efforts in promoting the sport. The clubs in the display represent more than two decades of painstaking research and experiment by Livingston to assemble a set based on his own personal playing standards. Each was restored by him and, if you had the time, and plenty of it, he would have filled you in on the characteristics of each one, including nuances of loft, weight, lie, and why each one was built the way it was. He could have told you all this and more because that's the way *he* was.

Ralph's Playset

Driver	J.H. Taylor	43.5" and 11° loft
Spoon	J. Shanks	41.5" and 20° loft
1 Iron	Tom Stewart RT	39.5" and 20° loft
2 Iron	Tom Stewart RT	38.75" and 23° loft
Mashie Iron	Tom Stewart RT	38.25" and 27° loft
Mongrel Mashie	Tom Stewart / Ernest Cassidy	37.75" and 31° loft
Mashie	Tom Stewart / D&W Auchterlonie	37" and 36° loft
Spade Mashie	Tom Stewart RT	36.5" and 41° loft
Mashie Niblick	Tom Stewart RT	35.5" and 46° loft
Niblick	Tom Stewart RT	35.5" and 51° loft
Putter	Tom Stewart RT	34" and 7° loft

About these clubs

Ralph was captivated with Tom Stewart and his clubs from the minute he touched his first hickory - a Stewart Putter. It is estimated that over the 20 years that Ralph collected and studied Stewarts, over 200,000 clubs passed through his hands. Important to mention, Ralph literally wrote the book on Tom Stewart - Thomas Stewart Jr. *Golf Clubs and Iron Makers* - the definitive book on the most prolific iron maker of the era and a seminal work in history of hickory golf. The clubs displayed here were Ralph's personal playset - a set curated over two decades - and each one personally selected and restored by Ralph. Given Ralph's many contributions to hickory golf, and the stature of Tom Stewart in the history of the game, it is nearly impossible to overestimate the historical significance of this set of clubs. These Stewarts we graciously donated to the Kingsley Club - a place held dear by Ralph and where he was a long-time member - by his widow, Krista, after his passing.

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2015-16

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A WEE NIP

Autumn 2015

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ON THE COVER

A misty morning scene right out of the late 1800s. The time, though, is August 2015 and Seth Lomison, 18, and his father, Matt, are making their way down the seventh fairway during the Foxburg Hickory Championship in Pennsylvania. (Seth finished second.)

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Down the Fairway... from the President

We have had another successful year at SoHG. As of Oct. 1 our membership stands at 539 total members. The U.S. Hickory Open in Dayton sold out for the second consecutive year. Next year's USHO is scheduled for Sept. 22-24 on the Lawsonia GC in Green Lake, Wis. Sign up early to guarantee yourself a spot.

Your Board of Directors has completed a review and update of our Bylaws and Constitution which will be submitted for your review and vote. Please take the time to vote. We have also completed a program whereby local and regional hickory golf tournaments, of at least 24 players, may apply for Championship Series points for their SoHG-member participants. The application form is on the website.

As you know by now, we are converting to a digital version of the *Wee Nip*. Not only will this

save on our costs, but a more interactive experience is achieved. Those members who desire a print version may still order that through our Secretary, Jim Davis. We have also moved to a new format for the monthly email newsletter, again saving considerable money. As a result of such initiatives, we have been able to meet our budget for the year. We will post final year financials after Jan. 1, 2016.

The SoHG is also developing a player ranking program (similar to the World Golf rankings for the pros). We will take into account many factors including international, national, local, and gutty events. This should prove to be an exciting new feature.

Our website committee is exploring ways and means of updating the current site, or creating a new one altogether. We will keep you posted as work proceeds.

As always, we thank you, our members, for your support and willingness to serve on committees. All of these efforts help us maintain the resources on our website, the continuance of our *Wee Nip* magazine, and the tournament and equipment standards that help us enjoy our favorite sport.

Dave Brown

FROM THE EDITOR

You will note John Fischer III's name a few times among the contributors to this issue. Mr. Fischer, an attorney in Cincinnati, Ohio, is also a golf collector, golf writer, an occasional hickory player, and is the current president of the Golf Collector's Society. He contributes to the GCS *Bulletin*, as well as *Through the Green*, the magazine of the British Golf Collectors Society. I am much in his debt, both for the quantity of his articles as well as their humor and erudition.

We are online. It is a brave, new world for a hickory golf publication, but not all things change. Those who wish can still find a printed copy of this humble journal, should

Dues call after Jan. 1

Annual SoHG renewal dues of \$35 are due **after Jan. 1** for all current SoHG members. Please renew as soon as possible **after that date**. Look for the "Renewal" button on your member dashboard when you log into the website with your password.

they choose. Simply write to me at the email address posted over there, at left.

If the "Nip" was a bit late this autumn, the fine November weather in Michigan is to be blamed. Your editor fell to the balmy allurements of his favorite local course.

Jim Davis

A Wee Nip – online maybe, but still grounded in hickory golf

BY JIM DAVIS
(This one's for WP.)

The *Wee Nip* will turn a dozen in 2016. While an even 10 is often chosen as the number for an early retrospective, your editor remained entirely oblivious of that occasion. Had our Society's publication become a golfing heavyweight, it might have had more of an impact on yours truly, but it remains, and rightly so, OUR magazine. It is published for our enjoyment as members of the Society, and attempts to stay current with the sport as it evolves. A pretension to greater ambitions it has never entertained nor, I think, would this have been much welcomed.

The SoHG emerged in 2000, a child of divorce, as a dozen unhappy campers departed from the larger embrace of the Golf Collectors Society (GCS) over a rules controversy during a national hickory outing. This was later exacerbated by a cool reception toward a proposal to standardize such rules to prevent future misunderstandings.

The rebels met in, appropriately, Williamsburg, Va., to foment their revolution. A mission statement was drawn up and the rudiments of a society for the play, enjoyment, and promotion of modern hickory golf was created.



The SoHG was initially envisioned as a private golfing/sporting club of the, then, smaller number of hickory golfers in the country. Ralph Livingston III, one of the group's founders, however, predicted that "this thing will become big." Gentle smiles greeted this prognostication, and, indeed, members were slow in coming on. Of course, at the time, you needed two current SoHG

members to sponsor your application.

As interest grew, and more clubs became available, facilitated by that traveling Johnny Appleseed of hickory golf clubs John Sherwood, more members joined. (As late as 2003, when I joined there were only about 60.)

Your humble scribe was recruited by Mr. Livingston to write news stories on the sport (I then had a modest post at a local paper) and, in 2003, invited me to an early "hickory open" held at the Kingsley Club near Traverse City, Mich. I believe he had hoped that this tournament would become "the" hickory golf event of the year. This event has now become the Belvedere Hickory Open, one of the most popular and well-attended hickory golf tournaments of the year.

The subsequent story by me on the event was noted by one Roger Hill, one of modern hickory golf's unsung pioneers, who suggested that a newsletter for the Society would be in order and that I proceed to snap to it and put something together.

Following my first international golf trip, in 2004, to take in the

Scottish Hickory and Musselburgh Foursomes, I gave it a go. Tad Moore suggested the title. A 12-page newsletter "A Wee Nip from the Society of Hickory Golfers" (at right) appeared in autumn 2004 with an account of the Musselburgh experience and such articles as



imagined would be fancied by the modern hickory golfer. There was an article by Don Gibboney on a favored hickory club set, a piece on the National Hickory Championship (Randy won for the fifth time that year), and several letters solicited from members here and in Scotland and Sweden. The fixture list was a short one, including, ironically, notices for hickory events hosted by the GCS.

It was a start, but a fitful one as the newsletter's biennial status would not become a regular feature until 2010. There were none in 2005, two issues in 2006, one in 2007, and another shutout in 2008. Possibly, as I think back on the period, my attention was on the faltering nature of my employer, which, you recall, was a newspaper. By the end of 2008, it was clear that the industry was headed for serious changes, the Internet and such free online advertising services as Craig's List, having a devastating impact on a newspaper's ability to profit. That, and the written – and printed – word began to submerge in the exploding world of smart phones and social media.

When the dust settled and I retired from my newspaper post, I was able to devote more attention to hickory golf and, as luck would have it, recruited to become the Society's editor and communications director, now Secretary. From that day to the present and for the foreseeable future, it has been my good fortune to serve such a delightful community.

In spring 2010, we added a yearly summary of world hickory golf events. Since then, there have been book reviews, essays, travel pieces, art, original stories, correspondence from around the world, equipment and playing tips...

What does the future hold? That's up to you.

Fortunately, the modern hickory golfer is one who discerns the distinctive value and altogether singular nature of a sport with a

continued next page

Full season of hickory golf nets CS medals for Sally Shiff, Cliff Martin

The yearly fixture list of tournament outings continues to grow and it is not unusual these days to see an unfortunate overlap of dates here and there. The encouraging note, however, is that there are more outings from which to select, however painful the decision.

At the top of the list for many players are the Championship Series events, designed by the SoHG to foster an exciting season-long competition. The most recent CS, which concluded with the U.S. Hickory Open at the Miami Valley Country Club,

began with the 2014 Mid Pines Hickory Open, and included, in 2015, the Mountain Valley Hickory Open, the Southern 4-Ball, and the Belvedere Hickory Open.

It was the final Mountain Valley event, as the long-time SoHG sponsor was sold to new owners who are not as hickory golf oriented as former owner, Breck Speed.

With only four CS events on the new calendar, the SoHG has begun to offer CS points for SoHG members in other tournaments that meet the basic criteria of at least 24 players in a one-day event, and 36 in a two-day event. (See the SoHG website under Championship Series Points for information.)

The theme has always been the opportunity to renew friendships and friendly competition on challenging courses.

2015 overall winner Cliff Martin (above left), is shown with a medal from the World Hickory Open, where he finished as the Amateur Champion. Martin's year also included a win at the Belvedere Hickory Open, and a second at both the Southern 4-Ball and the U.S. Hickory Open where



CLIFF MARTIN AND SALLY SHIFF are the top 2015 CS medalists.

he also won the low amateur title.

"Mountain valley was my first event after a neck surgery and it was slow going, Martin says. "Belvedere was my first under par event and it was great to bring the family along."

The recently played Mid Pines event was also Martin's first visit there. "I loved the hotel and the course," he says.

Martin says he had his eye on a CS medal from the outset and knew that Hardscrabble Country Club pro Jeremy Moe would be the one to beat. After his Belvedere victory, Martin knew he needed a win or solo second at the USHO to take the 2015 CS medal.

A tough early round in the USHO put him in eighth place, but Martin rallied to shoot the best round of day two, which helped him leapfrog six other players into second.

As well as the CS events and the WHO, Martin was asked to play for the American team at the Hickory Grail, a biennial fixture of the British Golf Collectors Society.

Ladies CS Champ Sally Shiff travels

Championship Division

First - Cliff Martin, 1,120
Second - Jeremy Moe, 1,040
Third - Ben Hollerbach, 680

Championship Net

First - Karl Nagy, 572
Second - Tim Flynn, 567
Third - Richard Schmidt, 504

Senior Championship

First - Tony Smarrelli, 1,600
Second - Dave Brown, 852
Third - Jim Rohr, 540

Senior Net

First - John Berggren, 889
Second - Paul Dietz, 721
Third - Terry Pemberton, 608

Super Senior Championship

First - Hamp Munsey, 1,040
Second - Mike Shiff, 800
Third - Max Hollon, 772

Super Senior Net

First - Wayne Aaron, 1,046
Second - Tad Moore, 768
Third - Bill Reed, 640

Ladies Championship

First - Sally Shiff, 560
Second - Andrea Hodel, 400

Ladies Net

First - Kris Ellington, 400
Second - Francine Smarrelli, 400

with her husband, Michael, to many hickory golf outings and has finished second at both the USHO and the Belvedere Hickory Open. It is a treat to see Mrs. Shiff in any hickory golf field, along with the other lady competitors. She has a solid game.

Check the SoHG website for dates, and updates, on all the CS events. 🌐

WEE NIP

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

rich and fascinating history and unparalleled literature. Golf with authentic clubs links one to a romantic past of legendary golfers who could do things with the clubs of the day that continue to amaze modern champions on those rare occasions when they "notice" hickory golf clubs.

In this context, a Society publication that seeks to share information of the past along with news and updates of the mod-

ern sport seems to fit in quite well. Add to this a happy number of correspondents and contributors who enjoy digging into history, or sharing their recent outings, or who simply wish to itch a creative writing bug, add to our modern enjoyment of this alluring pastime. It is all one of a lovely tapestry and, we hope, has a long future ahead of it.

So, please continue to share your stories – fiction or non, your poetry, songs, photos, experiments in club rehabilitation, discoveries on the course, drawings,

and anything else you may wish to share that enhances or augments your love of hickory golf. The *Wee Nip* has always been your magazine and reflects who we are as a hickory golf community.

The move to an online publication, while necessary to cut costs, does not alter what the *Wee Nip* is for our Society. It may still be ordered in print form for those who wish. I shall be one of these, for I like to take my chair and enjoy the printed words across the leaves of a favored book.

The bottom line, as always... enjoy! 🌐

Lionel Freedman

2015 Mike Brown honoree

The annual Mike Brown Award may be one of the most important aspects of the Society of Hickory Golfers, not because it bestows some lofty prestige, or somehow aggrandizes the status of the SoHG, rather because it reminds each of us what is important about this sport.



Mike Brown was a beloved friend of golf collectors and hickory golf. His passing in February 2010 left a big dent in many hearts. As Bill Engelson wrote in the *Wee Nip* in April 2014, "...many of you never had the chance to know Mike and therefore may not completely appreciate the honor" that comprises the award.

It was Brown's respect for the traditions of hickory golf, his dedication to growing the sport, and his undying passion for promoting lasting friendships through the sport and golf collecting that underscore the SoHG's reason for establishing the award.

It is important we never lose sight of these values. The award in Brown's honor reminds us of why we are drawn to this sport and to golf collecting.

It is with great joy, then, that the SoHG is proud to announce **Lionel Freedman** as its 2015 Mike Brown honoree.

"I never met Mike Brown but had started to correspond with him," says Lionel Freedman. "My association with the SoHG then was perhaps not as close as it is today but I knew in what high esteem he was held by his fellow members. I remember sending the medal that I had had struck by David Kirkwood, of the five Musselburgh Open Champions, to be presented to the first recipient of the award and I don't know if that was kept or passed on. [The medal is an integral part of the Mike Brown Award, included inside the frame with Mike's favorite club – a Stewart mongrel mashie. – Editor] I have researched the history of the awards and am immediately humbled to be added to that list."

Freedman could not attend this year's Mid Pines Hickory Open, where the Mike Brown honor is customarily bestowed, so the ceremony has been moved to February and the occasion of the International Hickory Cup in Tampa, Fla.

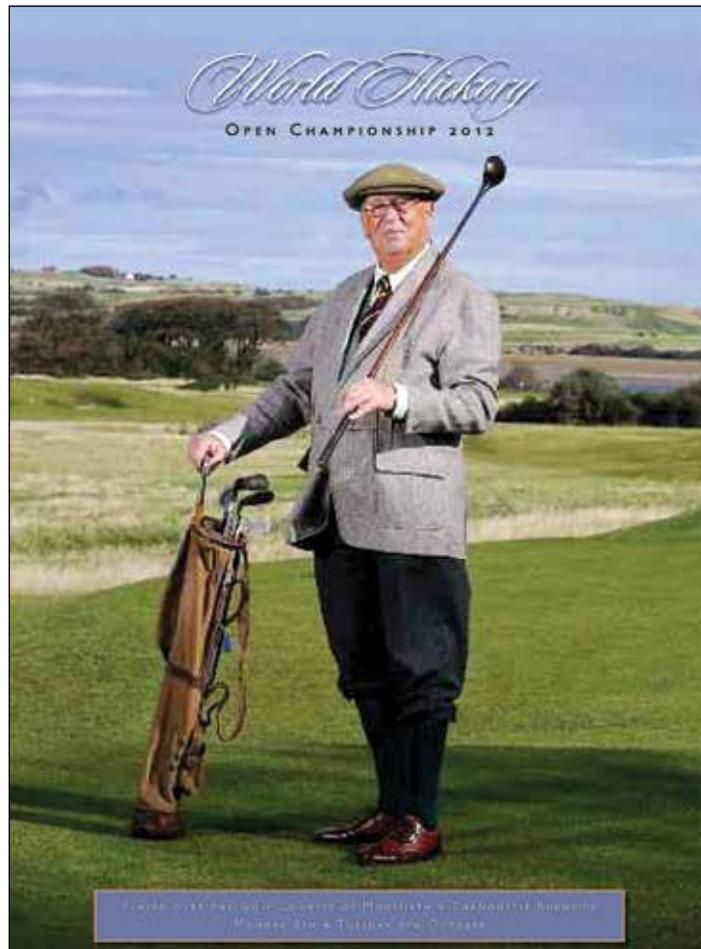
SoHG President Dave Brown notified Freedman of the award this past October during the World Hickory Open.

Freedman was born in Chiswick, London in 1934. He attended boarding school from 1940–51 and was in National Service from 1952–54. His basic training was in the Suffolks, where he was attached to the 17th Training Regiment of the Royal Artillery, with the rank of Sergeant. He entered the London Stock Exchange in 1954 and became a Member in 1961. He retired in 1970 but could not sit still and by 1974 ran several different companies. "I could possibly be considered an entrepreneur," he says.

Freedman plays out of golf clubs in London, Surrey, and Berkshire-Wimbledon Park, Roehampton, Henley, Coombe Hill, St Georges Hill, and Wentworth where his residence is on the 15th on the West course.

He was a top amateur in the U.K. for many years, holding his own with well known British professionals and other amateurs.

"I had a wonderful match with Henry Cotton, whom I lost to in the 1961 Gleneagles-Saxone at the last in a scratch foursomes



LIONEL FREEDMAN, the SoHG's 2015 Mike Brown Award recipient, posed for the 2012 poster of the World Hickory Championship, which he founded.

knock out," he recalls. "And a singles match against Bobby Locke where I was beaten 3/2. I also took lessons from Richard Burton, the last winner of The Open before the war (1939). I have great memories as well of Syd Scott who was runner up to Peter Thomson in the 1954 Open and the 1955 Ryder Cup."

Freedman retired to Scotland in 1995, was divorced 1997. He remarried in 1998 to Beth Lady. "An article in the *Scotsman* described me as marrying a 'Musselburgh Lass'. We have between us two sons, two daughters and seven grandchildren."

Met for the first time, Freedman might seem as a kindly old grandfather, softly spoken, articulate, and well mannered. It would be difficult to discern the promotional dynamo behind the gentle countenance.

He is Captain of both The Musselburgh and Musselburgh Old Course. He was Musselburgh Old Course Secretary and Treasurer in 1999-2005 and is considered to be "the man who revived the Old Links." (Stories in the very first two *Wee Nips* recount his efforts on behalf of Musselburgh Old.)

Freedman is a member of the British Golf Collectors Society and is international liaison with the SoHG.

He founded the World Hickory Open in 2005 and is currently a member of Craighielaw Golf Club in Aberlady, East Lothian. He was Captain of the club in 2007-09.

He also created an online magazine called World Hickory Golfer (www.worldhickorygolfer.com), which he began in September 2010 as a monthly on-line magazine. Though production was halted after December 2011, it was a wonderful compilation of essays and photographs exploring hickory golf around the

world. Those early editions can still be found at www.worldhickorygolfer.com.

Freedman helps coordinate such international matches as an American hickory golf team that plays in a triangular match with a World Team and the BGCS, as well as the International Hickory Cup of the SoHG.

These days, Freedman doesn't often get a chance to play his hickories, but enjoys the Scottish Hickory Open at Musselburgh Links and Gullane 3. A favorite track for hickories is Kilspindie in Lothian. He recently played in the 2015 Polish and the German hickory opens.

"I toured Sweden in 2009 when the Grail was held there," he says. "I have played only once in the WHO. I find it difficult to play when running an event. I also try the annual match between England and Scotland and have played for both sides."

His favorite hickory weapon is an old baffle.

One of the things that Freedman really loves is the community that has been created through hickory golf. "I love the people you meet and the playing of hickories that brings back our many traditional courses built in the late 19th century and through to the Second World War. Hickories allow us to play these courses in the way they were set up and meant to be played."

As for the past Mike Brown honorees, Freedman says he knew most of them and has fond memories of golfing with Tad Moore at his own club some years ago.

"I used to religiously download the newsletter that Frank Boumphrey produced and also made some contributions to it. We did have a major incident with the printing of one issue when Frank forgot to limit the extent of the printing and I ended up with 750 pages. My reward was a tot of whisky when he came over for the Scottish Hickory one year. I clearly remember how much I enjoyed the issues and was sad when they ceased due to his ill health."

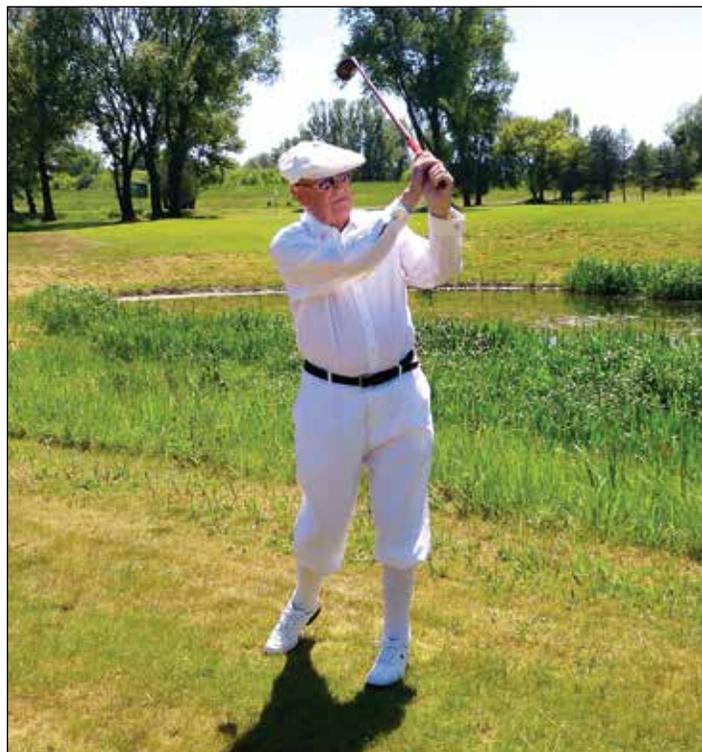
He and Roger Hill have met in Scotland and Grails (a BGCS fixture) and often correspond about equipment and the beginnings of modern hickory golf.

"As to Ralph Livingston III, I had one brief conversation back around the Millennium when he inquired about the tournament I founded in 1999, the Musselburgh Challenge. He seems to have been in many ways the Godfather of modern hickory golf. In one of his emails, Roger quoted Ralph as predicting 'that hickory golf would be big again', and we all laughed. I think he would be pleased to see how his prediction is progressing."

Freedman notes, too, the honor he feels at sharing the award with the likes of Bill Engelson, Mike Just, and Ken Holtz.

"I am a firm supporter of Tad, Mike and Ewan Glen over here as the three main current manufacturers of hickory golf clubs. Those three firms are an important ingredient to the continued growth of the hickory game and deserve to fit well with the enthusiast who prepares and restores the older clubs. All of these parties are essential ingredients for the continued growth of hickory golf and while I am involved with the World Hickory Open, I will embrace them all."

Freedman says he hopes to continue promoting hickory golf through his SoHG association and by promoting and expanding the tournaments he so loves – the Muselburgh Challenge, and the WHO. The latter continues to grow in world prestige. The 2014 championship was won by senior touring pro and Masters Champion Sandy Lyle. The association with such golfing champions brings more attention to the hickory game. More than 100 players turned out for the 2015 championship held this year in Carnoustie.



GRACEFUL SWING IS STILL THERE. Lionel Freedman is shown above while playing in the Polish Hickory Championship in Warsaw this year.

Freedman also served as the honorary starter for the inaugural World Hickory Match Play, held at the Philadelphia Cricket Club in 2014.

When not promoting hickory golf, or serving as an honorary starter for prestigious hickory outings, Freedman enjoys time with his family and any of several books from his large library. "Anything by Darwin, Longhurst, and Warren Wind," he says. "Modern authors Dodson and Sampson as well as fiction by Mark Frost are favorites, too. With sincere apologies for not mentioning plenty of others." 🌐

Europe's young hickory golf star

The *Wee Nip* was not aware of young golfing prodigy Louis Dudzus when we prepared our autumn 2014 article on young hickory golf stars. The youngster, 9, has a fine game by all accounts and recently finished quite well in the European Hickory Championship.

Photos of Louis taken by Zdenek Sluka can be seen on the back cover of this issue. How we wish we had this young man's focus when hitting from the sand!





NEWS, NOTES, CORRESPONDENCE

CB Macdonald a hickory favorite for gutty player

Just came back from the CB MacDonald Challenge played at the oldest golf course in North America, established in 1875, Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club. It's a nine hole gem with some very challenging holes. Played with gutty equipment or modern hickory sets, it's a challenge. From the straight-away No. 1, to the long No. 3 (with a sway backed green), the front bunker and Lake Ontario behind protected No. 4, the progressively narrowing par 5 No. 5, and the try-me-if-you-dare No. 7, to the original fort sided No. 8 and the longish par 3 No. 9, the course is redolent of golf charm, history, and competitive fun. The wind off the lake also makes the occasional nature's call a challenge. Ambience, a lovely club house, and a continental flair makes Niagara-On-The-Lake a personal hickory favorite.

Jim Clawson

Beware the hickory 'bug'

Three years ago, I played a round of golf with a set of loaned hickories. The "bug" bit me and there seems to be no antidote. Attached are photos of my "dining-area" space in the apartment. Who needs a table, etc. when a workshop is needed? It's growing daily – HELP!!

Gary R. King



Hickories 'refresh' the auld game

I just joined Pine Needles/Mid Pines and I'm so excited to get started on my hickory golf journey there. As you surely know, there is a huge hickory golf culture in the area and even a couple of wonderful shops owned by folks with a wealth of knowledge about the equipment. I want to regain the challenge and joy of creative shot-making that's now gone with modern equipment. I'm 57 years old, about a scratch golfer, and I hit the ball 30 yards longer now than I did in my physical prime. Driver/wedge to holes that were designed for mid-iron approaches just isn't interesting, and I'll never be good enough to be truly competitive in that world. Hickory golf seems a perfect way to refresh things and bring back all that I've always loved about the game.

David Madison

Lang Willie's final "Haggis" is a blast

The 2015 Hickory Haggis was Bill "Lang Willie" Engelson's last event as Captain of the Carolina Hickory Golf Association. As with most LW events, it went off without a hitch. Attendance was a tad low because of conflicting or upcoming hickory events but the 11 men and one woman who played enjoyed good weather and a challenging venue for the Capn's swan song.

The Southern Pines Elk's course, for those of you have not played it, is a Donald Ross creation. Charles Mitchell, my chauffeur and front-nine opponent for the second day, considers that with \$1-2 million spent on it, the layout would rival Pinehurst No. 2. I'm not enough of a golf course aficionado to deliver a sound judgment on that observation but do admit to enjoying the Elks course and finding No. 2 to be technically-challenging but aesthetically uninteresting.

The Elks course is hardly boring. At least one golfer who walked it the first day thankfully boarded a cart for the second. Up hill and down dale can wear a fellow out. Recent top seeding prompted management to require us to keep carts in the rough and not cross fairways – a request that was generally adhered to. Perhaps the threat of a post-round tire inspection had something to do with that.

The structure of the Hickory Haggis creates some interesting pairings. It is a nine-hole match play event over two days, which means four nine-hole matches per participant. For the first day, match-ups were based on handicaps. For the second, the best performers from Day 1 competed against each other. This leads to results that can be rewarding or quite sobering.

My foursome for the first day was comprised of the higher handicappers: Andrea Hodel – one of the boys if ever there is one – Richard Woodson Payne and Lang Willie. Andrea and I finished with 10 and 9.5 points respectively. Lang Willie languished a bit but Richard Payne racked up 13.5.

This meant that on Day 2, Andrea and I moved from the first to second foursome, where we could more or less hold our own. Lang Willie dropped back to the first group and Richard was promoted to play with the big boys in the final foursome. Now he was battling the likes of R.C. Butler, Richard Schmidt, and runaway winner Gary Podlogar. Let's just say it was a tough Sunday for Mr. Payne.

This is by no means a criticism of the structure of the event. It permits the good players to do well and for those who had a bad first day to make a charge on the Sunday. This generally happened. Gary built on his strong first day to hoist the cup at the awards ceremony. R.C. Butler finished second – to the delight of his young daughter – and Andrea won the bronze medal, pipping your marginally-humble scribe by half a point. The fact that she outdrove me all day when we played from the same tees is a matter to be passed over lightly.

It is devoutly to be hoped that someone picks up Lang Willie's baton for this event because it is an absolute joy played on a most entertaining golf course.

Hugh Menzies



Marty's 'Hickory Hundred' raises money for junior golf

Since 2008, the golf professional at the Belvedere Golf Club in Charlevoix, Mich., has played 100 holes in a day to raise money for the local junior golf program. For the past three years, the club's pro, Dennis "Marty" Joy (far right), has done the 100 with hickories. He has

multiple cart drivers so that he can "hit and run." This year he played white tees only although in past years he has played multiple tees.

After 100 holes, Marty was only plus 9 on the day, finishing in the early afternoon. "We average about \$12-\$15,000 a year,"

he says. "We sent about 140 kids to Ferris State University golf camp and awarded 25 seasonal passes to kids for the local municipal course."

The Belvedere Golf Club annually hosts the Belvedere Hickory Open, a Championship Series event on the SoHG schedule. Marty's scores for the 2015 "Hickory Hundred" are shown below.



You, too, can play hickories at Augusta National...

...if you are a former Masters Champion and a World Hickory Open champ, such as Sandy Lyle, shown at left on the 12th tee and below, with his hickories, courtesy of Tad Moore, during a casual round on the famous course earlier this year. Lyle is the only man to hold both titles.



Titleist																			
Date	Event Hickory Hundred - Marty Joy																		
PAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
Name																			
Round #1	44	33	53	43	53	34	64	54	34	44	34	37							71
6:15 AM																			
Round #2	44	43	54	45	38	55	44	34	43	37							75		
7:55 AM																			
Round #3	45	54	54	44	39	54	46	34	43	36							75		
9:20 AM																			
Round #4	44	35	43	43	38	44	43	43	36							72			
10:45 AM																			
Round #5	54	33	54	43	37	54	44	45	44	39							76		
12:15 PM																			
Finish 10 Holes	43	43	54	43	36							FINISH TIME 2:25 PM						+9	
1:35 PM																			

Hello new SoHG members!

(As of April 2015)

We're pleased to welcome you to our hickory golf community. Be sure to look for fellow members in your areas. Check the SoHG website for regional and member information, resources, and events. If you have any questions, let us know. And, if your name was overlooked, please let us know and we'll correct the oversight in the next newsletter.

- George Barnett, Victoria, Texas
- Cory Blackmon, Monroe, Ga.
- Craig Boesch, Lincoln, Neb.
- Matt Bowman, Edmond, Okla.

- Reginald Bray, Blowing Rock, N.C.
- Jonathan Byron, New York, N.Y.
- Edward Chanda, Granville, Ohio
- Lloyd Cole, Easthampton, Mass.
- Erskine Deaton, Burlington, N.C.
- Dan Dixon, Oswego, N.Y.
- Maryjean Esselman, Charlevoix, Mich.
- Chris Farris, Palmyra, Va.
- Frank Favata Sr., Bethlehem, Pa.
- Paul Fiedorek, Hernando, Fla.
- Aven Ford, Beavercreek, Ohio
- David Friesen, Cincinnati, Ohio
- Jim Glynn, Plymouth, Mich.
- Jack Hamilton, Dayton, Ohio
- Jim Hanson, Bakersfield, Calif.
- Bill Houghton, Diablo, Calif.
- Jeff Hunt, Bloomington, Ill.
- Ryan Jambau, Brownstown, Mich.
- Tom Kennedy, Bonney Lake, Wash.
- Greg Kolkman, Ft. Wayne, Ind.

- Jason Kronenberger, Dayton, Ohio
- Matt Lomison, Pfaftown, N.C.
- Patrick Maddock, Martinez, Calif.
- Jack Maynard Jr., Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Jason Moyes, Porterville, Calif.
- Claus Muehlfeit, Arogno, Switzerland
- William Murphy, Menasha, Wisc.
- Peter Nastasi, Emerson, N.J.
- Jeannine Niehaus, Santa Cruz, Calif.
- Roy Niznik, Lake Forest Park, Wash.
- John Peterson, Gettysburg, Pa.
- Terry Pitts, Bennet, Neb.
- David Rasey, Des Moines, Iowa
- Robert Reheard, Kenosha, Wisc.
- Dan Riley, Allen Park, Mich.
- Charles Rudd, Kingwood, Texas
- Anthony Santavicca, Livonia, Mich.
- William Schlick, Watsonville, Calif.
- Dan Schnitker, Manhattan, Kan.
- Jason Shaffer, Swartz Creek, Mich.

- David Shultz, Portsmouth, Ohio
- Francine Smarrelli, Pinehurst, N.C.
- Ernie Stathes, Kettering, Ohio
- Biggs Tabler, Louisville, Ky.
- Robert Ubbing, Southern Pines, N.C.
- Byron VanArsdale, Greensburg, Ky.
- Michael West, Ypsilanti, Mich.
- David Whelan, Bradenton, Fla.
- Rick Whitfield, Hobe Sound, Fla.
- Ed Williams, Hamburg, Ill.
- Steve Youngdale, El Portal, Calif.





LETTERS FROM ABROAD...

A wee nip from ‘down under’

BY ROB DOWNIE

Hickory golf in Oz (Australia) is still really in its infancy, even though there are a few registered groups around the country that have been going for quite a few years. For example, the Australian Golf Heritage Society is based in Sydney; the Golf Society of Australia is in Melbourne; and a group in Queensland. These groups only have a limited number of tournaments each year, and generally the fields are small – 10-15 players. The websites for these groups are easy to Google, and contain some useful information.

There are some pretty good players among the hickory-ites, and many of the U.S. members would remember Alan Grieve who won the 2011 U.S. Hickory Open at French Lick, Ind.

Tom Moore is probably the father of hickory in Oz. He won't tell me his age, but he must be one of the oldest PGA pros still playing golf in the world! As a pro in the days of transition from hickory to steel shafts, he used to cut up hickory shafts to use as extensions for steel shafts, and throw the heads and leftovers in the rubbish. He did this for years, throwing away countless hickories, until a visit to England to try and qualify for the British Open. While there, he found that the Brits kept everything. They threw nothing away. On return to Oz, he started to keep/collect all manner of hickory related “stuff,” and amassed thousands of clubs. Many of them now reside in the AGHS museum in Sydney. Put a club in front of Tom and he can tell you when and where it was born, its birthweight, etc.

Hickory clubs are often found in Oz at antique shops and



MODERN HICKORY IN OZ – Giving the sport a boost in Australia are, from left, Graham Evans, Mary Evans, Tony Doggett, Tom Moore.

garage sales, as well as on eBay. Many of the clubs have “Made in Australia” stamped somewhere, along with a local pro’s name. They were generally imported in pieces and assembled locally. There is not much call for replica hickories in Oz because most tournaments stipulate that originals must be used.

Traveling to overseas tournaments is not popular because of the time/distance involved. A trip from home to Carnoustie takes about 36 hours for the average Ozzie – not to mention the \$Oz (Australian dollar) is almost worthless. We tried to get New Zealand interested in a “cross-sea” challenge (four hours travel), but did not get a reply. Not much happening there either!

We have some world-class courses in Oz, and a few suitable for hickories. One such course is at Peppers Craigieburn at Bowral near Sydney. A short 9-hole course, it has been the same layout for over 100 years.

So, hickory has a long way to go in Oz before we catch up to many other parts of the world. But those of us who play, (and I know of three NewSouth Welshmen who use hickories for at least two rounds every week), there is no nicer sound than the swoosh of the shaft, and the click of the head. ☺

Who are you kidding?

In 1926, the brilliant sports journalist, Grantland Rice, and the equally brilliant illustrator, Clare Briggs, teamed up for a humorous golf book they titled *The Duffer's Handbook of Golf*.

Rice, who was “Granny” to his friends, produced sports films, covered top sporting events, edited *The American Golfer* from 1920-36, and was a charter member of Augusta National. It was he who began calling the tournament The Masters.

Briggs worked for such powerhouse news organizations as the St Louis *Globe Democrat*, the *New York World*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and then the *New York Tribune Syndicate*. He had a knack of capturing the personalities of the many people he met at golf and, indeed, in many walks of life. A member of Wykagyl Country Club in New Rochelle, N.Y.,

Briggs also immortalized many of his fellow members, many in this book.

The drawing at right comes from a chapter titled: *On Kidding Yourself*. Here, as in the rest of the book, Rice and Briggs poke gentle fun at the unique psychological pratfalls to which golfers alone seem universally prone. Instead of playing for a possible recovery, Rice says, most golfers try to “out-Jones Jones through a miracle recovery they could never make in 17,000 years.”

There are priceless poems about caddies, golf balls, and lying about your game.

Throughout the book, Briggs’ drawings are the perfect complement to Rice’s hilarious and often well-meaning chapters. It is clear both men have a deep affection for the game and the many foibles of its legions of hapless devotees.



(Originally published by MacMillan Co. and available in reprint through the Classics of Golf.) ☺

Back in the day...

It is often instructive, as well as entertaining, to re-visit the turn-of-the-past-century golf magazines for a glimpse as to what was on the minds of golf writers and editors of the day. Advertisements, too, are an illuminating window into the culture of the times. The following article and advertisement come from the *USGA Bulletin* of April 1898. As we pursue our modern hickory game, many of us are using replica balls. Some, like Chris McIntyre, have experimented in some depth with both real and synthetic gutta percha.

"Answers" of London writes about the current status of guttapercha (he/she uses this as one word) as it applies to golf balls of pre-1900 America.

There are a couple of points in the article that remain dark to this writer. For example, can someone tell me what "a very shallow groove is all that is necessary to detach the points of impact..." means. Can't quite follow that one.

USGA Bulletin, April 1898

Answers - London

The improvement that has taken place in the last fifty years in the manufacture of golf-balls has practically revolutionized the game of golf, and has been one of the chief factors in bringing about its present enormous popularity. Prior to the introduction of guttapercha, which occurred about 1848, the golfer had to content himself with a leather ball stuffed with feathers, for which he had to pay half-a-crown.

This ball flew badly, and in wet weather it got so knocked out of shape that the player was commonly allowed to lift it on the putting-green and roll it between his palms, until such time as it attained some semblance of rotundity. Even then it must have been about as lively to putt with as a half-sucked orange. If it split at the seams, which always happened, sooner or later, the ball would whirr through the air like a badly-hit partridge, scattering its feathers as it flew.

But with the advent of guttapercha the feather ball soon became as extinct as the dodo. The new ball was more durable and kept its shape better than its feathered rival; but even had its lasting qualities been less obvious than they were,

The New Henley
is made of identically the same composition as before

The Only Difference

Being in the Marking

THE SOLE AGENTS
SAM'L BUCKLEY & CO., 100 William St., N. Y.

its greater cheapness would have been sufficient to establish its supremacy. It only cost one shilling, and to save three "sixpences" at one full swoop would have been an irresistible argument to the Scotch mind in favor of the new-comer.

The ingenuity of golfers and golf ball makers has been much exercised in devising a marking that will have the greatest effect in assisting the flight of the ball. An experience of twenty years, dating from the days of the old hand-hammered balls to the present day, when new varieties are daily coming into the market, does not enable the writer to pronounce definitely in favor of any one particular pattern of making.

Provided the guttapercha be good and properly seasoned, there seems no reason for the very deep markings which are to be seen on many balls; while it is obvious that the undue multiplication of lines must decrease the size, and, consequently, the resisting power, of the points left exposed to the blow. If the material be hard, a very shallow groove is all that is necessary to detach the points of impact, and to sustain the blow. Up to now, guttapercha remains unrivaled as the best material for golf-balls. Various composition balls have appeared from time to time, the best known being the "Eclipse"; but though they have had a certain vogue, they have failed to supplant those made of the raw material. All guttapercha comes from the Straits Settlements, Cochin China, Cambodia, etc., and it arrives here in a

very adulterated condition. As it comes from the tree the gum is of a cream color, but it is largely mixed with resin; while bark, gravel, and other impurities are added by the natives to give it weight.

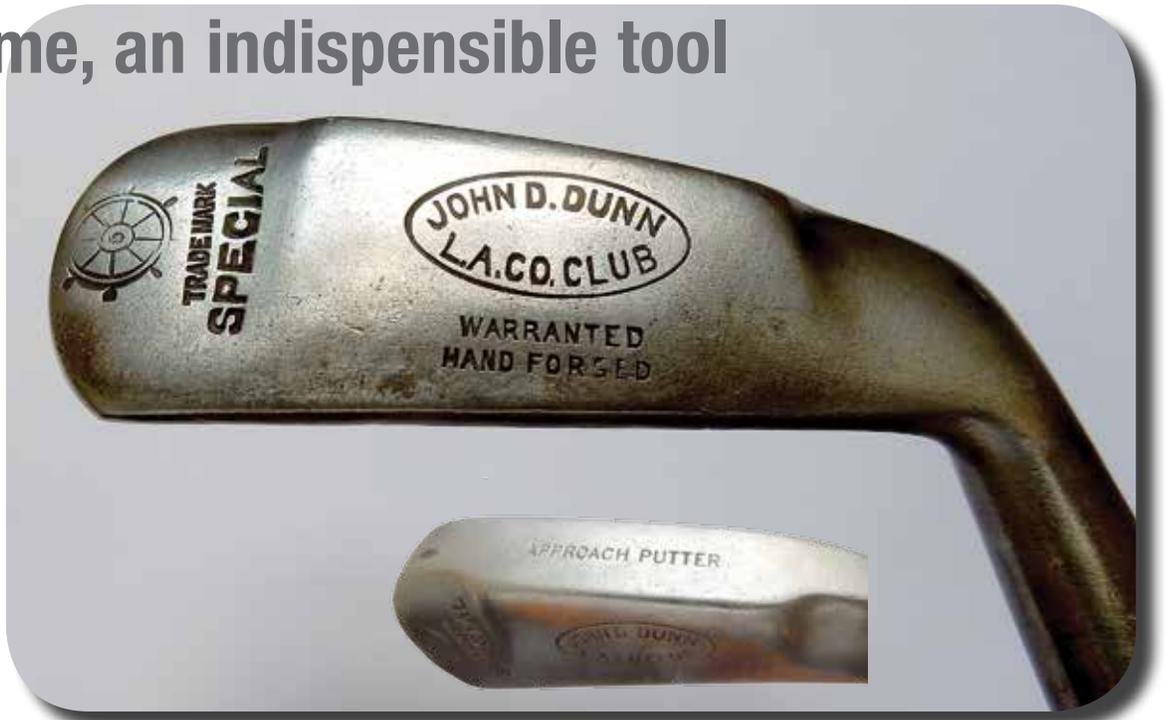
It reaches the manufacturers in a dry state, and the first process is to cleanse it of these impurities. By the time the pure gum is arrived at, the guttapercha becomes black, owing to oxidation. According to the thoroughness of this cleansing process is the quality of the guttapercha. After being well mixed by the use of masticators, it is made into long sticks, and the balls are moulded from these. The best balls are made from the pure gum, without any admixture whatever, but less pure qualities are used for cheaper purposes.

A golf-ball is at its best six months after being made and painted, and may be said to deteriorate from that point. No paint that has yet been invented will adhere properly to the ball much after that period, and will be found to chip off in course of play. Of course, the best guttapercha will keep in condition the longest time, but even the best becomes hard and brittle in time from exposure to the air.

The golf-ball making industry is now a most important one, and is increasing by leaps and bounds. Although it is impossible to arrive at an absolutely correct estimate, from the figures we have seen it seems probable that something like ten or twelve million balls are made every year in this country. ☺

Approaching putters

At one time, an indispensable tool



BY PETE GEORGIADY

In the second half of the 19th century golf publications occasionally yielded mention of golfers carrying two putters – an approaching putter and a holing-out putter. The approaching putter was usually a metal putting cleek, heavy with some loft. It was primarily used off the greens for long lag putts from the fairway or from the edge of a very large green. A bump and run-type shot was normally played.

The holing out putter was often a wood mallet, long head or semi-long head, well weighted and was trusted by the golfer for short or mid-length putts when accuracy was paramount. In the 19th century those approaching putters were not marked as such but upon close examination they will usually have a couple degrees greater loft than the normal putting cleek and be substantial in weight. The extra loft was to give the ball a good running start should the grassy lie be a bit longish and the hole a good distance away.

In the early 20th century, metal blade style putters were the dominant club used on the greens. By the 1920s a new club variety was becoming popular. The purpose was similar to the old approaching putter of the 19th century but these newfangled clubs were labeled with a handful of marketing-oriented names. They were designed to give the golfer confidence for those short run-up shots from off the green when a putter wasn't serviceable and the pitching wedge was still a few years from being introduced. On British links courses putting, or approaching from the fairway was frequently an option.

Personally, I have used the MacGregor Semi-Putter, off and on, for 20th century hickory play and an Angus Teen bronze alloy approaching putter (unnamed) for 19th century hickory play.

This list exhibits a broad variety in nomenclature used by club makers for their respective clubs. 🌐



Approaching Putter – Hendry & Bishop

“ They were designed to give the golfer confidence for those short run-up shots from off the green when a putter wasn't serviceable and the pitching wedge was still a few years from being introduced. ”



Approaching Putter – J P Cochrane



Runner Up – Hendry & Bishop



Super Approaching Putter – J P Cochrane



Chipper (steel shaft) – T Morris



Running Up Putter – Wm. Gibson



Approaching Putter – Hendry & Bishop



Stroke Saver Chipper – Robt. Forgan



Approach Putter – Stadium Golf (Rivers-Zambra)



App Putter – Spalding (Dysart)



Semi-Putter – MacGregor



"The Lurgan" Stroke-Saver – W L Ritchie

FEATURED CLUB



EsKit Putter Gibsons of Kinghorn

BY JOHN FISCHER III
CINCINNATI, OHIO, USA

In 1955, at the ripe age of 11 (almost 12!), I accompanied my parents to St. Andrews, Scotland, to attend the biennial Match for the Walker Cup. We traveled by train from Cincinnati departing at dinner time and arriving at Grand Central Station around breakfast time. We sailed that afternoon on the SS America with the members of the U.S. Team and a group of USGA officials. At the time we did not know this would be the last team crossing by ship; future trips would be by air, and the magic of the team getting to know each other well before the serious golf was to disappear.

We stayed at Rusacks Hotel, which was then not the five star facility it is today. Great Britain was still recovering from World War II. Bathrooms and showers were down the hall and the creaking elevator seemed questionable.

One day my Dad came back to the hotel with a treasure for me: a No. 2 EsKit putter by Gibsons of Kinghorn with a round danga wood shaft, cut down to my size, and a serrated sole for the wooly links greens of Scotland. Things were a bit more casual than today, and I went over to the practice putting green near the front of the Royal & Ancient clubhouse with a few British size Penfold balls and practiced away. (For many years I thought they were called "Patent Penfold" balls because of the markings.)

I carried the putter everywhere and showed it off to anyone who wanted a look. One of the persons who gave it a stroke or two was U.S. team member Billy Joe Patton who liked my No 2 EsKit so much he purchased five of them, albeit with longer shafts.

Back home I putted pretty well with my EsKit, before I knew putting was harder than it first appeared. As I grew taller, the shorter shaft was not suitable and I switched around between various putters. Most of the time I used a hickory shafted Geo. Nicoll GEM putter, although I admit to using a Bullseye, several Otey Crisman models and even a Ping Anser on occasion. But my mind always drifted back to the first club that was truly my own, the No 2 EsKit. It had disappeared and I couldn't find it.

For the past few years I searched around for a No. 2 EsKit at trade shows and placed a classified ad in the GCS *Bulletin*. John Sherwood found a nice original EsKit 1 for me, which had a longer top line, a slightly more shallow face, and a punch dot face, close to what I was looking for, but not quite the magic No. 2 EsKit. The blade of the EsKit 1 looks a great deal like my Ben Sayers "Benny," which also had a longer top line but without a danga wood shaft. The Benny bears the standard Sayers "Robin" cleekmark, has a deep serrated sole, the stamp "gruvsol" on the back, and a square grip.

I finally located a No. 2 with the help of Gibson club expert, Tad Moore. It has a danga wood shaft, but the grip is square, not



round like my original. It did have the scored face and the more rounded toe which distinguished it from the EsKit 1. Both of my EsKits, 1 and No. 2, bear the Gibson star cleekmark with a "G" within the star.

I decided to give the square grip No. 2 EsKit a go and found that the square grip helped keep the blade square. The putter has a wry neck blade with a serrated sole and loft of 10 degrees.

When I putt, I press my hands forward a little, which reduces the loft angle and also hoods the face.

I'm a wrist putter and cup my left wrist on the backstroke to keep the blade square throughout, the complete opposite of the Ben Crenshaw screen door stroke, which must have merit, but I could never find it. The hooded face also imparts overspin to the ball. This is the method used by the great Walter Hagen, but I'm certainly not in his class by any measure.

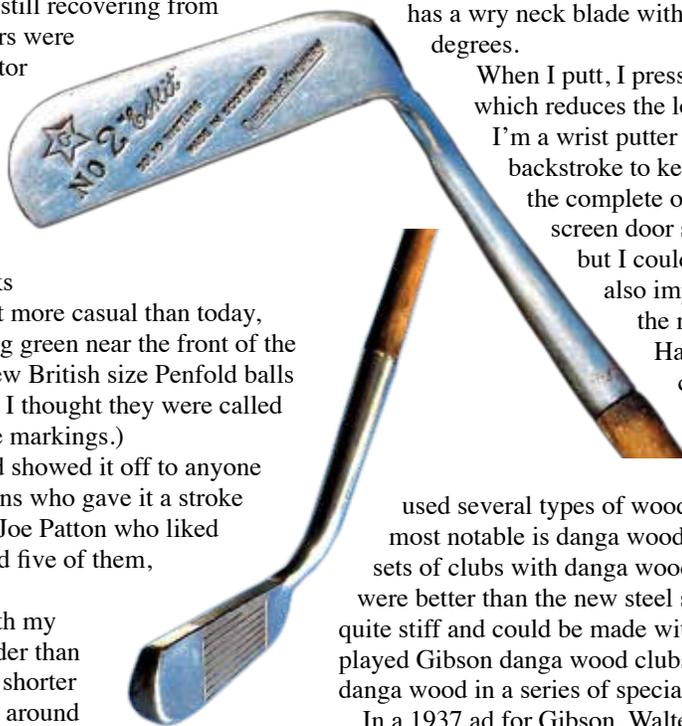
The EsKits I have bear a "danga wood" marking on the shaft near the grip. Gibson used several types of wood in the EsKit putters, but the most notable is danga wood. In fact, Gibson made entire sets of clubs with danga wood shafts, which some believed were better than the new steel shaft. Danga wood was hard and quite stiff and could be made with a thinner, lighter shaft. Hagen played Gibson danga wood clubs for a brief period and later used danga wood in a series of special Hagen model niblicks.

In a 1937 ad for Gibson, Walter Hagen commented, "I find that the danga shaft is ideal for putting, it makes the ball run more and hug the green and provides a better putting touch."

Danga wood itself is illusive. I've seen it in Gibson advertisements and in occasional odd clubs. Tad Moore believes it comes from a tree in Northern Africa, and I've seen references to a danga coming from Africa, but also Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and Malaysia. One research librarian suggested to me that danga wood might have been a trade name used by Gibson, and not a specific type of wood at all.

The reader will note the spelling "EsKit." I chose the capital "K" after closely examining the stamp on the back of the club, which is in script with what looks to me to be one word with the capitalized "K" in the middle. However, the more common spelling in print is "EsKit."

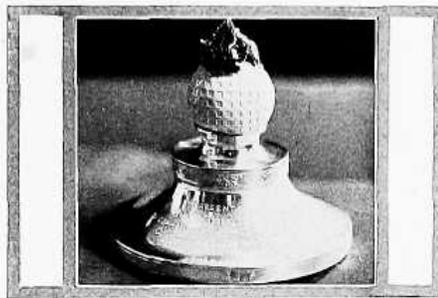
So I've come full circle from the No. 2 EsKit at age 11 to a different No. 2 EsKit at age 72. It's not quite the same as the fellow who once told me that in his lifetime he'd had three wives, but only one putter...but it's close. 🌐



Caught by the News Camera



FAMOUS AIRMAN LEARNING GOLF
Commander Lowell Smith, after making a right around the world, has Bob Simpson teach him golf



NOVEL WAY TO PRESENT BALL
Field-Marshal Haig was presented with the golf ball used in opening Jasper Park in this attractive setting



PRACTICE NET IN CONGRESS
Members of Congress are now to be found practicing golf in the Congressional "gym." Ralph E. Updyke of Indiana is shown



TAKING A SLOW MOVIE
Willie Macfarlane posing for a series of airplane studies of the swing



"SHORTS" IN CALIFORNIA
Edward Janes playing at the Los Angeles Country Club



WALTER J. TRAVIS
First picture taken of the famous amateur golfer wearing a beard



THE GOLFER'S EYE-SHADE
Introduced by Lord Charles Hope in the Gold Vase Tournament at Moor Park

FIRST USE OF THE GOLF VISOR? This page from the April 1926 *Golf Illustrated* shows Lord Charles Hope in a tournament at Moor Park. Surely the now ubiquitous cap was already being worn here and there, but this may be the first example of a golfing magazine taking notice of the snappy apparel. And, for heaven's sake, shorts! Still, the knee-high argyles are there to save the day for tradition.



BOOK REVIEW

The Philadelphia Cricket Club

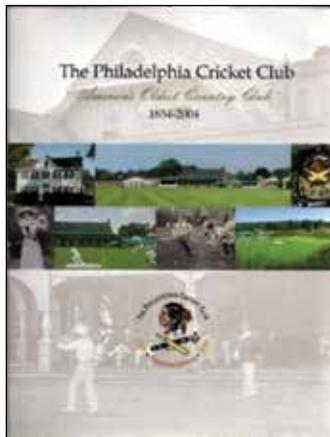
America's Oldest Country Club 1854-2004

David R. Contosta

2004, Kutztown Publishing Co., 121 pages

BY ROBERT BIRMAN

Hickory enthusiasts may know the Philadelphia Cricket Club (PCC) as the permanent modern-day host of the World Hickory Match Play championship, now in its third year. Those who have had the privilege to walk the old St. Martins course (site of the 1907 and 1910 U.S. Opens) know that its nine hole suburban layout is deceptively cunning.



PCC built a beefy, world-class 18-hole track, Militia Hill, that hosted the 48th PGA Professional National Championship this past June. The two courses are a marvelous study in contrasts; one short, seemingly simple course that still shows its defenses 125 years later; the other, a difficult-looking design that caters strictly to today's modern game.

The venerable Philadelphia Cricket Club was founded in 1854 by 20 sportsmen to create "a private sporting group." Little could they have known, their legacy would endure for centuries. Written to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the PCC, this hardback by David Contosta chronicles the decades of achievement of what, the author argues, is the oldest country club in the nation "in continuous operation."

Extensive footnotes accompanying the 120 pages of history are useful, including the very first. It affirms the founding in 1882 of the Country Club of Brookline (which was without golf and other sports until 1900), The Olympic Club in San Francisco of 1860, and the Germantown Cricket Club of 1854 (also in Philly) which never technically emerged as a "country club."

Modern readers will benefit from being reminded of the national and global context that existed when this august club was created. At the time, Britain was the world's super power and no one could conceive a time when this might be otherwise. The U.S. population was 23 million people, three million of whom were in slavery. (New York state's population today is 20 million). Abraham Lincoln would not be elected for another six years. Women could not vote. There was no electric lighting, no phones, not even the typewriter. Railroads existed, but nearly everyone relied on horse-drawn transportation.

We rarely imagine golf being introduced into our nation just at the verge of standardization of indoor lighting – Edison's patent was granted in 1880.

In Philadelphia, land baron Henry Howard Houston provided 7.25 acres of land to Cricket Club members in 1883. Riding the surge of interest in golf in America at the time, the members created their first golf course in 1890. Cricket was in decline, as sports such as tennis and golf gained popularity in the U.S. These were affordable, family-friendly, and possible to play into old age.

PCC suffered five devastating fires in its first 50 years, but the



PHOTO/EVAN SCHILLER

FIRST AND NINTH HOLE on the old St Martins Course at the Philadelphia Cricket Club. The U.S. Open was played here in 1907 and 1910.

members rebuilt after every one. Through the years, numerous national champions have emerged from the fields of the PCC, in swimming, squash, tennis, baseball, field hockey, and golf.

It is believed that golf first came to the Philadelphia region when a textile worker at Haverford College introduced the game there in the 1830 with a few, crude holes. At this time in the States, British pastimes were paragons of refinement – cricket, rowing, fox hunting, and golf. (Fox hunts were still being conducted on the Main Line when I was growing up there in the 1970s). Sitting in an office all day, contemporaries believed, "weakened the body and crushed the spirit."

The early and sustained success of the Cricket Club is impressive. Just prior to incorporating golf, cricket at PCC was routinely attracting 5,000-10,000 for top matches. In 1885, there was only one golf course in the United States. By 1900, one-thousand courses existed. PCC built an 18-hole course in 1898, designed by Willie Tucker, at 6,124 yards and par of 73.

The biggest accolades of the original course were in its hosting of the U.S. Open in 1907 and again in 1910. Complaints at the time included comments that the course was "bumpy and shaggy." The winner in 1907 was Alex Ross, brother of golf course designer Donald Ross, who shot 302 for 72 holes. Incidentally, during that match, the first-ever hole-in-one in a U.S. Open was recorded, by Jack Hobbens.

The members oversaw some remodeling for the 1910 Open. Alex Smith won that year, carding a 71 on the final day. Smith won in a three-man playoff against American John McDermott and another of his own brothers, Macdonald Smith. Smith played in 18 U.S. Opens and accumulated 11 top-ten finishes.

Tragically, a fire in 1908 not only took one person's life, but it also destroyed the club's extensive archives – all of the cricket and golf photos, memorials, cups, trophies, and records. While rebuilding the clubhouse, the course remained in continuous use, with its women members garnering the most recognition. Florence Vanderbeck is pictured in the book in 1915, the year that she won the U.S. Amateur, all in white with two golf gloves, French cuffs and a long tie! The following year, another female member made it to the final round in the same championship.

Golf events at PCC helped raise funds for the war effort during WWI. In 1918, a 16-year-old Bobby Jones played in a charity tournament at PCC for the Red Cross, paired with Alexa Sterling,

the then-reigning U.S. Women's Amateur champion. By 1920, the club boasted more than 1,800 members, one-third of whom were avid golfers.

Between the wars, PCC members began to plan another 36-holes of golf on a nearby plot in Flourtown, Pa., in part motivated by the fear that the leased land on which the original course (St. Martins) lay would be eventually developed for homes. A.W. Tillinghast designed two courses in 1922, but only the 18-hole Wissahickon course was built due to finances. A third course was finally built on the property in 2002.

In 1931, as feared, the St. Martins course was subjected to a forced reduction to just nine holes as the membership lost a portion of its leased land. Some of the original holes remain, and a few new ones were created. In 2013, the World Hickory Match Play was inaugurated at the St. Martins course, and the venue has been named as the permanent site for this annual, international tournament.

One of the vast charms of the St. Martins course is that it is maintained in a style consistent with the zenith of its reputation. There is only one cut from fairway to rough, and from green to rough, so grass "collars" come into play from tee to green. As a contestant in the World Hickory Match Play over the past two years, I can attest to the delight this timeless course imparts. While short, it is jam-packed with meaningful challenges and creative shot-making demands.

Contosta's history recounts a raid on the club during Prohibition and an amusing account of a caddy strike in 1936 during which caddies hounded golfers on the links with vicious heckles and insults.

Gene Sarazen visited the Flourtown course in 1958, where he was photographed with onlookers and later gave an informal talk at a "stag dinner." Through the 2000s, the Wissahickon course has been listed consistently as one of America's Top 100 classic courses, and its 9th hole as one of *Golf Magazine's* top 500 golf holes.

In recounting the opening day of the Militia Hill course in 2002, the author states that, "*Jack Jennings, the immediate past president who had done so much to make the new course a reality, cut the ribbon and took the first ceremonial shot with an antique putter once owned by Willie Anderson and used in the 1910 U.S. Open, held on the St. Martins course.*" The accompanying photo of Mr. Jennings (in full backswing) shows a ball teed just behind the freshly-cut ribbon. This reader must assume the antique is a spoon or brassie, not a vintage putter, for goodness sake – let's hope so!

The Tillinghast course went through a massive restoration in 2013-14 and is the pride of Philadelphia today. There is a complete list of the club champions in all sports dating from 1885 and the club's presidents from 1854. If you've ever walked these links, or wished to do so, this is a most enjoyable volume. 🌟

Robert Birman has been playing hickories exclusively since August 2011. A co-founder of the Northwest Hickory Players, Birman lives in Port Townsend, Wash. He manages and writes articles for the group's website and is a frequent contributor to the Wee Nip. - Ed.



Hickory lovefest at Mimosa Hills

BY HUGH MENZIES

When Brian Schuman organizes a hickory golf event two things are pretty well assured – participants will have a good time, and plenty of medals will be dispersed.

That is what happened at the Donald Ross-designed Mimosa Hills golf course in Morganton, N.C. on Oct. 9-11. Brian worked closely with Mimosa pro Jimmy Piercey and Mike "Hillbilly" Henderson to ensure matters ran smoothly. And they did; though Brian did have to ask participants to delete from their cellphones his promise of non-stop superb weather. It rained and drizzled all Saturday.

A total of 34 hickory nuts paid \$295 to participate in the three-day event that featured a round of stableford scoring (Day 1), four ball/alternate shot (Day 2), and individual and team play (Day 3). Modesty prevents me from naming any winners but I assure you it was hard to miss out – medals showered down upon participants with the frequency of the Saturday raindrops. Rumor has it that Brian owns a 25 percent stake in the Franklin Mint and has cornered the market on Krugerrand look-alikes. He even provided two young lovelies – one of them his niece – to woman the registration tent and dispense the Rich Schmidt memorial bottle of Macallan (most welcome in the rain).

If the weather was variable outside, it was habitually sunny inside. Mimosa is coming back from some difficult times and the larger staff reflected this. They all proved willing and able to meet the eating and drinking requirements of the golfers and their significant others. John Greene read a note from the club president welcoming the group and Jimmy Piercey hoped the hickory classic will become an annual event at Mimosa and perhaps grow a bit larger.

In recognition of the wonderful help provided by that popular Mimosa member, Brian proposed the event be henceforth known as the "John Greene Sr. Fall Hickory Classic." Assent to the proposal was raucously unanimous.

This decision improved John's mood immensely. He and I had been cruising along at several under par in the four-ball when I hit a beautiful – if I say so myself – second shot onto the green. Long birdie putt coming up. John followed suit with a fine effort. Now, if you have read the Carolina Hickory website or played with me lately you know I can't see beyond the end of the tee box. Long story short, I had hit the wrong ball and therefore so had John. Took us a few holes to restore our equilibrium. Too late!!! But John is a fine fellow and restrained himself from doing an Elin Woods on me.

But enough about me! When last seen, Mr. Schuman was working on refinements for next year's event. Now if he can just get the weather right in 2016! That's okay Brian, it was glorious on Sunday. 🌟

Whither – or wither – the waggle?

BY JOHN FISCHER III

A club head waggle at address is not unusual. Many golfers do it to get comfortable or establish the right rhythm for the swing. 1902 British Open winner Sandy Herd, the first to use a rubber core ball for a major victory, was an incessant waggler; Sergio Garcia re-grips the club at address over and over; and Keegan Bradley almost dances through a pre-shot routine while twirling the club head.

On the other side, 1920 British Open champion, George Duncan, thought about his shot as he walked to his ball, took a stance and hit, no waggle, no re-gripping and no pre-shot routine. Bob Jones took a single waggle as he set his feet, almost the same as Duncan.

However, this is not about the waggle at address, but a highly personal series of thoughts on selecting clubs for hickory play, and the value of the waggle in the process.

Backing up a bit, when I started playing golf at the age of 12 in 1955, the golf professional's shop was full of wondrous sets of woods and irons. In Cincinnati the clubs of choice were usually MacGregor with its manufacturing plant located in Cincinnati, or Power-Bilts by Hillerich & Bradsby which were made down the road in Louisville.

Shafts were labeled "stiff," "regular," or "soft." To my great embarrassment, my first clubs, both woods and irons, were Louise Suggs lady's models by MacGregor. There were no youth clubs and, to my relief, I had a growth spurt the next year and graduated to a set of MacGregor Byron Nelson irons and a second hand set of Wilson woods with pyratone shafts.

There were no club fittings, special measurements, machines to calculate club head speed or proper lie. The professional pointed out which clubs he felt were appropriate and the buyer picked up the club and waggled it around, took a few practice swings and looked down the shaft to see if the head "looked right," and the sole was relatively flat on the floor. The process usually did not include actually hitting balls since the club head might be damaged.

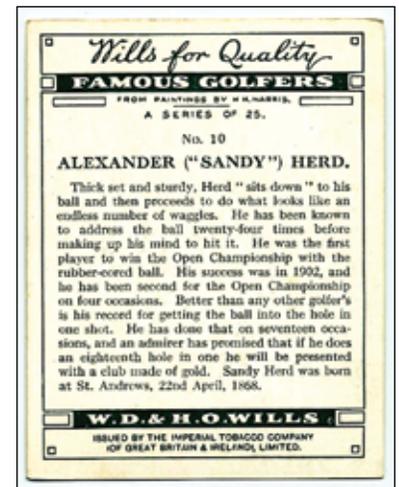
I mention my early experience because today's club selection method is almost mechanical. One is fitted by machines measuring club head speed, lie and launch angles, video-taped views of the swing, hand size to fit the proper grip size and the like. Purchasers are seldom asked how the club feels or how it looks.

For the neophyte hickory player, perhaps the best start is to purchase an assembled set of play clubs at a collectors show which look and feel right. Seldom is there an opportunity to hit a ball with clubs at a trade show. The waggle gives feel as to weight, grip size and shaft length. The real test comes when playing your new-found hickories on the course and you will find yourself replacing clubs which look better or are a bit heavier or lighter by trial and error.

The process could be described as "trial, selection and rejection." The rejected club may be redeemed with a bit of lead tape,



ALEXANDER "SANDY" HERD was known for excessive waggling of the club head at address. The card above was from a painting by H.H. Harris.



WILL'S CIGARETTE CARDS, c. 1930

or filing a part of the head down, or replacing the grip, or sanding the shaft slightly to get more flex or replacing the shaft altogether.

If tinkering has failed, the miscreant club can be put away and replaced with another; perhaps it will deserve a second chance. If not, rather than collecting a closet full of clubs which failed you, it can go on a table at a trade show, sold on the Internet or given to a friend who thinks it workable.

At some point, you may want to look for clubs by Tom Stewart, Gibsons of Kinghorn, Geo. Nicoll or some other highly regarded club maker. Those clubs, in general, were well crafted, have high quality heads and good balance, which is not to say that a mass-produced hickory might not be the best one for you.

Picking clubs, and getting the right ones, isn't an easy task. In fact, it never stops as hickory players are always picking up new clubs and giving them a good waggle. But some clubs last. In 1926, Bob Jones went to Great Britain to play in The Open Championship and was scheduled to qualify at Sunningdale where 1904 Open champion Jack White was the head professional.

Jones was looking for a new driver, and he found it there, a Jack White model, but not before looking at 16 Jack White hand-crafted drivers. The one Jones selected had a rather large head, with lead arranged to impart over spin, low flight and a long roll. Jones used his new Jack White driver in the qualifying round returning a score of 66, 33 shots and 33 putts. Jones never used another driver. Sometimes you do find "the" club.

Jones picked out his clubs one by one, and had an arsenal of over 100 clubs which he changed based on the requirements of a course and the playing conditions.

But even Jones was not a perfect picker. He was never quite happy with his mashie-niblick. As Jones said in "Down the Fairway" (1927), he had J. Victor East, golf professional and club designer, test his irons which "showed that in my own crude and purely instinctive way I had assembled, all unknown to myself, a perfectly coordinated set of clubs. All but the mashie-niblick, said Mr. East. It was sort of a maverick. I have felt for some years that there was something wrong with that darned club."

The mashie-niblick referred to was probably a Hendry & Bishop which was changed out for a mashie-niblick by Geo. Nicoll which Jones used in his Grand Slam year of 1930.

The late Sam McKinlay, editor of the Glasgow "Evening Times" and weekly golf columnist for the Glasgow "Herald," a fine

continued next page

‘Dave Mac’ clubs a playable link to grandfather’s legacy

An email from SoHG member John McIntosh spoke of his search for clubs from David McIntosh, his grandfather, a Scottish immigrant and golf pro. It included the photo of the Sammy, at right, and another of the elder man with Tom Walsh, a mentor. (David McIntosh is on the right in the photo below with Tom Walsh.)

Writes John: Tom Walsh was a caddie at Beverly Country Club on the south side of Chicago, was a pro at Olympia Fields around 1919, and in the mid-late 1920s decided to do what David McIntosh had done, build and operate a daily fee course of his own. He built Westgate Valley, a few miles from Oak Hills, which McIntosh built. Walsh also served as president of the PGA of America in the early 1940s. There were five Walsh brothers in all and all were involved in the golf business in some way along with their sister, Agnes.

My dad always spoke about how Tom would come to visit Grandpa at Oak Hills so the two of them could put their heads together and try and figure out how they’d survive the Depression. Somehow they did survive and Tom was instrumental in establishing a free golf school for the Chicago Tribune newspaper.

The Sammy, which is in my bag, I call a “Dave Mac” club. Most of his Stewarts say “D.B. McIntosh,” but some of the older smooth-faced Stewarts say “J. McIntosh, Galewood, Illinois.” This would have been when he was at Westward Ho, in what was called Galewood at the time. We believe J. McIntosh was his youngest brother, John or Jock. My dad’s given name was John but he was always called Jock because that’s what “Grandpa Mac” called him.

Grandpa Mac was involved with such clubs as Glen Oak, Ridgemoor, Fort Wayne CC and two of the Cog Hill courses.

With the exception of our annual member guest tournament at our club in March, I’ve been playing Grandpa Mac’s old hickories exclusively for almost a year. No plans to stop because I can feel him every time I hit one of his sticks (if that makes any sense!) 🍷

David McIntosh also spent a year or two as the club pro for Kent Country Club in Grand Rapids, during that club’s early days. If you spot any of the clubs mentioned above, let us know and we’ll put you in touch with John. – Editor



The Waggle

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

amateur golfer who represented Great Britain and Ireland on the 1934 Walker Cup team and was a semifinalist in the 1947 British Amateur Championship, became an early convert from hickory to steel, except for two clubs, his putter and his mashie-niblick. Retaining a hickory putter was not unusual but keeping an odd hickory was.

While a golfer in the 1920s and 1930s who played a “mixed bag” of steel and hickory, other than the putter, was frequently regarded as a bit of a boulder, McKinlay felt his steel shafted equivalent of his old mashie-niblick just didn’t have the right feel.

When looking for clubs, don’t overlook quality replica hickories from clubmakers like Louisville Golf or Tad Moore Golf. The 2014 World Hickory Champion, Sandy Lyle, used replica hickories made to his specifications by Tad Moore with stiff shafts, a little more upright and some special grinding. A waggle or two was probably in Lyle’s selection process.

Tad reports that he has made six to eight Star OA model hickory sets (based on MacGregor and Geo. Nicoll heads) for Lyle who keeps two identical play sets in the United Kingdom and one in the United States. Lyle has a Tad Moore replica brass head Chicopee putter with a hickory shaft which he uses with his hickories and his modern clubs because he couldn’t find another putter with the same feel.

James Braid, one of the “Great Triumvirate,” which included Harry Vardon and J.H. Taylor, that dominated British golf at the beginning of the last century, suggested that once a player found the right driver, an exact duplicate head should be made by a club-

maker fitted with a stiffer shaft for play in windy conditions.

There is a story, perhaps apocryphal, that James Braid went to bed one night and woke up driving the ball much farther having acquired a new driver with a heavier head.

A little high school physics (my limit) might help. Linear momentum (ball speed) is the product of mass times velocity, so it follows that if one can swing a heavier headed club properly, the ball should go farther. Of course, a heavier club head affects the shaft, and the ability to maintain grip, footing and balance. Today, better players tend to favor drivers with a lighter head and shaft so they can increase velocity, the other half of the equation.

To muddy the waters on James Braid’s heavier-headed driver, the aforementioned George Duncan, known as the “pro’s pro,” asserted that Braid’s new driver had nothing to do with Braid’s increased distance. It was, he said, that Braid changed from a very upright swing to a flatter swing, allowing more rotation and a sweeping, faster swing – back to the linear momentum equation.

Braid was an inconsistent putter using a wooden-headed putter, but when he took up an aluminum headed Mills putter modeled on the Philips long-nose wooden-headed putter, he became a very good putter. Braid used the Mills putter to win his five Open Championships and then, around 1920, he put his Mills putter aside and chose a Gibson “Orion” putter, a blade with a large flanged sole. Sometimes even our best clubs fail us and change is required which is part of the enjoyment of playing with hickories. The ideal club just may be on the next table at a trade show.

The takeaway: pick your hickories by waggle and feel over time, feel free to reject one club for another and, if you change your swing pattern, you may have to pick out some new clubs. 🍷



Wide World of Hickory – 2015

Europe

We are grateful to the various scribes of the British Golf Collectors Society whose reports on several hickory championships in the U.K. were the basis for the following brief summaries of these events. For more on these events, please visit the BGCS website at www.golfcollectors.co.uk

FEBRUARY

28 – Czech Hickory Championship



Jiří Martinka reports: The National Hickory Championship was played at the Royal Golf Club Mariánské Lázně. In first was Dalibor Procházka with 87. Second was Jurgen Muller with 92 (playoff). Third was Marek Kunc with 92.

MARCH

27-28 – Welsh Weekend

Thirty-two BGCS members arrived at Borth & Ynyslas Golf Club on a fine day and were warmly welcomed by the Captain, Philip Morgan. He and the Chairman, Vice-Captain and Lady Captain all joined us for a team event (a 3-ball Stabelford competition), with players using either hickories or modern clubs.

Winners were Stefan Kjell, Gail Henderson and James Alexander with 75 pts.

On March 28, 60 players were on hand for the match between BGCS hickory players and Aberdovey. BGCS President Philip Truett announced the results of the match and presented the Hickory Trophy from last year's R&A Autumn Meeting to BGCS member, Nigel Notley. The BGCS won by 13 holes up to 5. The Darwin Trophy was presented to Alan Henderson.

Wind was the major influence for the Welsh Hickory Championship at Aberdovey on March 29, for which there were 40 entries, including nine Swedes, three Finns and some new members from the UK. Thirty-six players completed 18 holes in a full gale, with sand blowing into our eyes on the outward nine. (The ladies decided that four holes were enough!) Scratch Medal holder, Jonas Fack, retained his trophy on 80 gross. Welsh Hickory Champion, Geoff Bleasby, from Goodwood, on his first visit to Wales, compiled 38 points, a great result in challenging conditions.

Welsh Hickory Championship results:

Points	Gross Score		
Geoff Bleasby	38	Jonas Fack	80
Jonas Fack	33	Perry Somers	83



WELSH HICKORY CHAMPION Geoff Bleasby, left, is presented with the Trophy by Peggy Burles whose late husband, Peter, was 1934 British Boys Champion and an early member of BGCS. The Trophy is actually the cup which Peter Burles won as Czechoslovakian Amateur Champion just before the Second War. In the photo at right, Burles presents Jonas Fack with the Scratch Medal Trophy.



Mikael Martinsson	32	Mikael Martinsson	84
Chris Walker	30	Claes Arma	84
Claes Kvist	29	Henrik Peyron	85
Bill Seldon	29		
Robin Morris	29		

Next year's Welsh Weekend is scheduled for March 18-20.

MAY

Not played – Open de France Hickory

The French Hickory Open was not held this year, but organizer Jean-Louis Panigel asks players help in deciding on future sites for the event. Please visit the SoHG website at www.hickorygolfers.com and look on "Upcoming Tournaments" for the French Hickory Open. There you will find a brief list of questions whose answers will help organizers in future planning.

29 – Scottish Hickory Championships

Ian Hislop reports:

Twenty-five hardy souls turned up for the 31st Scottish Hickory Championships at Scotsraig on May 29. Overseas competitors included two Finns, an Austrian, an Australian, a Scot from Belgium, and five Swedes. Starter Lionel Freedman was on his usual excellent form. Most of our members had not played Scotsraig before, and were full of praise for the James Braid layout. The course was played off the 6,310 yards par 71 yellow tees for the men; and 5,791 yards par 72 red for the women.

The scratch title was won by Englishman Nigel Notley scoring an excellent 81 just edging the Belgian Scot Iain Forrester with an 82.

Nearest the hole winners at the 3rd and 13th were Hamish Ewan and Jonas Fack.

The ladies prize was won by the captain's wife, Gail Henderson.

Third handicap went south of the border with Chris Homer scoring 93 net 76. Second place was won by Edinburgh's John Still with a 91 net 75 and the winner of the Scottish Hickory Championship for 2015 was past captain and East Lothian resident David Kirkwood with a very good 83 net 69.



SCOTTISH HICKORY CHAMPION, David Kirkwood, center, is presented his medal by Gail Henderson. Ian Hislop is at right.

June

4-7 – Polish Hickory Championship

Martin Panosch reports:

The Polish Hickory Championship took place at the First Warsaw Golf & Country Club, designed in 1989 by the Swede Jan Sederholm. Thursday evening charming Soňa Lelakowska welcomed guests with a dinner at the restaurant Rozana in central Warsaw. On Saturday we played in bright sunshine in memory of Bobby Jones, one of the greatest players in the hickory era. On hand was Lionel Freedman of Great Britain who helped with trophy presentations.

With players from Scotland, England, France, Czech Republic, Israel, Poland and myself from Austria, there was a truly international field. Winner with 90 strokes was finally Dalibor Procházka from Czech Republic, runner up Dariusz Bobinski



WORLD HICKORY GOLF

and Czesla Kruk. With a Roaring 20's Party we celebrated under the stars and trees on the club terrace.

Thank you, Sofia for the wonderful weekend.

9 – Central England Hickory Championships

Keith Bilbie reports:

Coxmoor Golf Club in Nottinghamshire was the venue for the Central England Hickory Championships on May 18.

Jason Dolman played excellent golf on his first visit to Coxmoor, mastering the course with a score of 36 points to become a worthy champion in winning the Tony Thorpe trophy. Society Vice Captain Chris Walker won the BGCS Seniors trophy with a score of 31 points and our president, Philip Truett, scored 29 points to win the John Hanna Tankard. Neil Hutchinson, with a score of 83 won the Scratch prize.



JULY

10-12 – Swiss Hickory Championship

Enrico Degiacomi reports: The 5th Swiss Hickory Championship Days were held on the Engadine Golf Club (1893) in St. Moritz, Switzerland. The top finishers were:

1. Brian Gee (the Netherlands) – 79
2. Andreas Ahlm (Switzerland) – 80
3. Claus Mühlfeit (Germany) – 82
4. Markus Kümmerle (Germany) – 87
5. Philipp Marty (Switzerland) – 88

All the players had a most enjoyable hickory golf day with lots of great sportsmanship. Some new friendships were created, which goes hand in hand with the spirit of hickory golf.

Check out more photos from the 2015 Swiss Championship at: www.swishickory.ch

Also, see a flipbook program of the event at this link:

<http://online.fliphtml5.com/iguh/twhd/#p=22>

Next year's championship is scheduled for July 29-31, also in St. Moritz on the Engadine course.



2015 SWISS HICKORY CHAMPION Brian Gee, left, is congratulated by event organizer Enrico Degiacomi.

15 – BGCS Open Championship Meeting

It was dampish morning as our members made their way to Monifieth. Entries were low resulting in only 16 players competing. Ten playing with hickories and six with steels. Hickory players received additional strokes as per our normal guidelines.

In the evening, at dinner in the Monifieth clubhouse, Captain Alan Henderson introduced Edinburgh-based New Zealander Scott Macpherson who received the Murdoch Medal for his book on *Golf's Royal Clubs*.

Scratch prize went to organiser Ian Hislop, who played with steels.

Then it was the hickory players coming to the fore. Third overall was Willie Tanner on 31 points who lost out to second place David Kirkwood who had the better inward half. The winner with 35 points was captain Alan Henderson who received the Ray Gossage Trophy from his unbelieving wife Gail.



OPEN MEETING CHAMPION Alan Henderson receives the Ray Gossage Trophy from his wife, Gail.

27 – Walton Heath Triangular Match

Alan Henderson reports:

This was the fourth equilateral-triangular match involving the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, Walton Heath Golf Club, and the British Golf Collectors Society. Twelve pairs from each team participated in three-ball six-some format, with Sunningdale Rules in operation and quarter-points at stake for the bye. Also introduced were temporary competition rules of "relief from heather - one shot penalty; lost ball in heather - two shot penalty. The drop being in the nearest semi-rough". Speed of play was of paramount importance.

Introduced by Society President, Philip Truett, who incidentally qualifies to play for all the teams, this "major" mixed event brings together seventy-two hickory golfers, some playing with hickory clubs for the first time, and several being overseas visitors. Such was the appreciation of those selected, that all were present and ready to go ahead of their allocated start-time!

The Old Course Walton Heath was at its finest. At the end of play everyone had enjoyed a hickory-experience and had their own special memories to take home.

Players enjoyed a magnificent buffet lunch in Walton Heath clubhouse, at the conclusion of which the company was addressed by all three Captains.

The result of this year's event was another win by Walton Heath with 16 ¾ points; BGCS 13 ¼ points; and the R & A 8 ½ points. Walton Heath remain undefeated!

AUGUST

1-2 – Swedish Hickory Championship

Jonas Fack reports:

The 18th Swedish Hickory Championship was held Aug. 1-2 on the links of Flommen Golf Club, which celebrated its 80th anniversary this year.



SWEDISH HICKORY PLAYERS

This year's championship attracted about 130 players from Sweden, and international players from Scotland, England, and Ireland. The championship was played in three different classes:

Gentlemen – played over 36 holes with a cut after 18.

Ladies – played over 36 holes with a cut after 18.

Seniors (+65) played over 18 holes.

The weekend of competition provided beautiful weather, with plenty of sun and wind that kept the course very dry. Flommen proved to be a very stern test of hickory golf, with greens well protected by deep bunkers, undulating greens, and the aforementioned water hazards.

Former European Tour players Magnus Sunesson and Persson Atlevi finished +7 and +9 respectively.

The 2015 Swedish Champions are:

Gentlemen – Magnus Sunesson (+7)

Low Amateur – Emil Norelius (+11) 3rd place overall

Seniors – Martin Mueller (+11)

Ladies – Christina Elmer (+14) won on 1st playoff hole.

The 2016 Swedish Hickory Championship will be held at Borås Golf Club in Västra Götaland. This is a parkland course built in 1933.

For a full report, see the *Tournament Results* page of the SoHG website.

15 – Open Danish Hickory Championship

Christian Juel reports:

"This year we presented yet another new 'old' course: Rungsted Golf Klub, one of the older courses in Denmark." Rungsted is a classic park course in a beautiful setting north of Copenhagen. The course is designed by Charles Atkinson MacKenzie, who is brother to the famous Alister Mackenzie, designer of Augusta National and other courses. First place in the Open Division was Dennis Willadsen or Stensballegaard Golf Klub, of the PGA of Denmark with a brilliant 82. In second after a playoff was Jonas Fack of Helsingborgs GK, Sweden, also with 82.

In the net competitions, the top finishers with their scores and home clubs:

Ladies

1. Lisbeth Skibsted, 88, Stensballegaard Golf Club, Denmark
2. Birte Welsth, 89, Rungsted Golf Klub, Denmark

Gentlemen

1. Johan Persson, 71, Malmo, Sweden
2. Henrik Westh, 73, Sollerod GC, Denmark
3. Czeslaw Kruk, 74, Musselborough GC, Scotland



THE WINNERS AND THE PLAYERS of the 2015 Danish Hickory Open.

WORLD HICKORY GOLF

SEPTEMBER

4 – England v. Scotland Hickory Matches

John Pearson reported for the BGCS:
I'm happy to report that the English. (Capt. J. Pearson) won by 6 points to 5 on a splendid day at The Hirsels, Coldstream, as near as you can get to the Scottish/English border on a golf course. A course laid out in the grounds of the famous border clan – the Humes. We had three ladies playing. Top match was singles between myself and John Still. The rest were fourballs. We dined sumptuously with the Club Captain afterward in a friendly atmosphere, in this, the first match since the failed referendum last year on independence.

5 – German Hickory Championship

Christoph Meister reports:
The 7th German Hickory Championship was played on Sept. 5, in Baden-Baden, Germany. Fifty-four players from 10 nations gathered in Selighof at the Baden-Baden Golf Club, founded 1901 and one of eight founding members of the German Golf Federation. The event was played over the club's new course opened in 1927. This year the oldest player was 83 years old, the youngest only 8. During the presentation club president Jörg Ammann said, that Hickory Golf and Baden-Baden just belong together.



PLAYERS AT THE 2015 GERMAN HICKORY CHAMPIONSHIP. From left: Christian Juel (Denmark), Andreas Karacsonyi (Austria), Iain Forrester (Scotland), Andrew Gauld (Scotland), and our starter, Hans Medvejsek (Bavaria).

Iain Forrester won for a third time (2009 and 2013) with 72 strokes. Britta Nord from Sweden won the Ladies title for a record fourth time (93 strokes). Markus Kümmerle from Konstanz finished as best amateur for a second time after 2009 with 80 strokes. These results compare to a 1927 hickory par of 70.

The net category was won by 9-year-old Louis Dudzus from Golf- und Land-Club Berlin-Wannsee with 63 (see photo on back cover). He was the youngest participant in the field and is one of the youngest, if not the youngest hickory golfer in Europe. The net ladies title went to Gaby Sasse (69 strokes), who also is from Berlin. Lionel Freedman, the father of the World Hickory Championship, was in the field and was the most senior player in this tournament.

18-19 – International Dutch Hickory Open

Iain Forrester reports: The 2015 IDHO opened with a reception and a Spanish-themed dinner in the beautiful setting of the Grote Huis.

Heavy, drenching showers delayed the tournament, and several players had to resign. Amiable John Ott became unwell and had to retire before he could even hit a ball. Coby Born was brought down in mid-swing by a pinched nerve.



PHOTO/ESMEE WALLER

Robust Pieck van Hooven inadvertently stepped into one of the many hidden deep puddles on the course and almost drowned. Match master Iain Forrester himself had to give up because he ran out of balls that were consumed by the heather's thirst for white round objects.

The weather finally improved and many players enjoyed their round on the historic Ullerberg golf course. After golf, eight fine Italian wines waited for the happy few who managed to stand out against the fierce competition. Lily Waller (92) and Brian Gee (82) finally came out on top and took the Waller Trophée for 2015. Runners up were Britta Nord (98) and Barbara Nettelblatt (104) for the ladies; and Perry Somers (86) and Menno Beelen (89) for the men.

Wilma van Rijn en Bengt Franzon took possession of the Stableford prize.

THE WINNERS OF THE IDHO 2015. From left: Ab van den Broek (Best Dressed), Bengt Franzon (Stableford), Menno Beelen (3rd), Perry Somers (2nd), Brian Gee (1st), Lily Waller (1st), Britta Nord (2nd), Barbara Nettelblatt (3rd), Coby Born (Best Dressed).

During the afterparty all players were given a beautiful reproduction of the famous painting of the children of the Tulp family playing Kolf, a generous present by the Dutch Golfmuseum in the person of John Ott.

We thank the players and all the people who helped to make this IDHO the warm and magnificent event that it was. We look forward to welcoming all players and friends for 2016. (See more at www.ullerberg.nl/IDHO).

OCTOBER

1-2 – 18th English Hickory Championship, also GB v. The World

Held at Rye Golf Club. Nigel Notley reports: We were blessed with very fine sunny weather. Thursday was quite windy but the Championship on Friday was windless and the course there for the taking. It wasn't!

On Thursday, 25 participants played in the match Great Britain & the World. GB snuck home by 4 ½ points to 3 ½. This was followed by informal drinks and supper in the George Hotel.

On Friday 2nd a high class field competed for the 18th English Hickory Championship over the Old Course. We used a special card with a par of 72 for men and women. Stefan Kjell returned an excellent 41 points in the handicap stableford to win the Founders Salver for the first time. Jonny Firth in second with 37 points was the same as Bengt Gustafson and Stephen Tubbs, but went to Jonny on the count back.

The scratch medal for the Tony Hawkins Trophy was won by Stefan Kjell also with a marvelous 76 for the first Swedish win in this event. Perry Somers was edged out by a shot with Iain Forrester one further back on 78. The Ladies compete in the overall competition using the same card. The leading lady prize went to Carolyn Kirk. We thank Rye very much for hosting us once again and look forward to coming back on Oct. 6-7, 2016.

19-23 – World Hickory Open

More than 120 hickory golfers from across the globe competed in this year's World Hickory Open, played on the Carnoustie Championship and Buddon Links, over Oct. 19-23.

Overall results of the 2015 World Hickory Open are:

World Hickory Open Champion: Andrew Marshall (Dereham) 67 76 = 143

Amateur Champion: Cliff Martin (USA) 69 75 = 144

Best Lady: Brita Nord 81 94 = 175

Best Lady Handicap: Christina Lundstrom 83 81 = 164

Best Handicap: Jake Anema (10) 66 75 = 141

Handicaps 13+, Stableford, first on the Champ course, then on the Buddon:

First: Willie Tanner (24) 39 41 = 80

See a full report on the WHO website at: www.worldhickoryopen.com/2015.html



PHOTO/ANDY THOMPSON PHOTOGRAPHY

TROPHY WINNERS at the World Hickory Open 2015 with the Provost of Angus, Cllr Helen Oswald, who presented the trophies. Left to right: Andrew Buchan, Willie Tanner, Cliff Martin, Brita Nord, Oswald, Christina Lindgren, Andrew Marshall, Brian Schuman, and Jake Anema.

25-27 – Hickory Grail

This biennial fixture of the BGCS has been played eight times. The ninth, this year, was contested at Baltusrol Golf Club in New Jersey, USA. The competition features European members of the BGCS vs. members from the U.S. For 2015, the U.S. squad took a commanding 5 to 1 lead after the first day's foursomes matches. The U.S. continued its domination on day two, with a final score of 11 to 7 after singles matches. The U.S. side will retain the Grail trophy for another two years, thanks to the 16 to 8 result. The venue for 2017 is not yet decided.



GRAIL TEAMS at Baltusrol Golf Club.

North America

Please note that full accounts and photo galleries for many of the following events are available on the "Tournament Results" pages of the Society of Hickory Golfers website, at www.hickorygolfers.com.

FEBRUARY

23 – U.S. Professional Hickory Championship

Eddie Peckels from Winter Springs, Fla., used a set of Precision hickory golf clubs from Louisville Golf to capture his second United States Professional Hickory Golf Championship (USPHGC) at historic Temple Terrace Golf & Country Club on Monday, Feb. 23. The tournament, which commemorates the 1925 Florida Open, is played with pre-1930 era equipment and balls. Peckels cruised around the Tom Bendelow-designed links in 74, three shots better than Jim Garrison of Tampa and Will Peterson of Orlando. In addition to the \$1,500 first prize, Eddie's name will be affixed to the John Shippen Cup for whom the tournament is dedicated.

Nancy Henderson (Orange Park, Fla.) recorded an 83 to take the honors in the ladies division. The effort earned her \$316 of the \$5,000 purse.

New for 2015 was the addition of the United States Amateur Hickory Golf Championship. Will Peterson, (Orlando, Fla.) playing from the pro tees, became the first U.S. Amateur Hickory Champion and was awarded the Oscar Bunn Trophy to commemorate the Shinnecock Indian who played in the 1896 U.S. Open.

Winner in the Sporting Division for amateurs, using handicaps, was Mike Henderson of North Carolina.

The USPHGC is sponsored by the United States Golf Teachers Federation and open to all golf professionals, male and female.

28 – The Arizona Desert Hickory

Tournament host Ken Holtz was pleased that threatening skies lightened up, but that winds and clouds offered a Scottish weather experience for the players. To the rest of the country, hammered by wintry blasts, that sounded pretty good. Jeff Smith of Arkansas took the overall tournament title followed just a few strokes back by Ernie Ernst of Wisconsin.

MARCH

16 – Mountain Valley Hickory Open

Nearly 40 players traveled to New Orleans to sample the challenges of the Audubon Golf Course, as well as the delights rumored to be available in the host city. Jeremy Moe (Ft. Smith, Ark.) won the Open division followed by Neil Day from Little Rock, Ark. The low amateur was Bobby Baker. This was the final Mountain Valley Hickory Open.

26-28 – Onion Creek/Swift Trophy

The USA, with Captain Michael Sloan, won the Swift Trophy Matches for the fourth straight year, beating Captain Terry Bader's Canadian team, 17 to 13. The Michael Roche miniature Keeper of The Greens Swift Trophy MVP awards went to USA's Rob Ahlschwede and Canada's Stephen Wong. In the 36-hole, two-day, medal play tournament, Jeremy Wright won the Championship Division with a 159. John Piffer was second with 168, and Willie Ducherer third with 174.

John Hutton's terrific 150 won the 60-69 Division. John Looten and Ed Ronco were second and third with 159 and 171, respectively. In the 70-Plus Division, John Berggren took first with a solid 158, followed by Bill Reed and John Overton both with 172s. Kim Haley, Sherwood Park, Alberta, took the Ladies Division with 189 for the two days.

In the Regular Scramble Division, Dick Verinder, John Ausen, Michael Myrick, and Scott Pilgrim came out on top with a 36-hole total of 130. In the Golf Club Division, the Onion Creek Club team of D. J. Jones, Rob Marchese, Pery Woolley, and Michael O'Brien, with a 134 total bested the Legends Golf Club team of Pat Clark, Ryan Galloway, Ron Lyons, and Dave Blocksidge.

John Hutton won the Johnny Henry Award, which goes to the best net score by a senior player (male or female) who is a member of the Golf Collectors Society. The Outstanding Volunteer award, a Russ Fisher donation of a restored vintage driver, went to Onion Creek Club member Jim Alston. Houston golf legend Charlie Epps, a Texas Golf Hall of Fame member, was our guest speaker and did an outstanding job. We also thank Tad Moore who generously donated several clubs for awards and gifts.

APRIL

23-25 – Southern 4-Ball Hickory Championship

The Highland Park golf course had a lot of rain prior to our event. Six inches came down the week before and changed a pretty fast course into a soft one. Twenty-two teams teed it up Friday and record scoring took place. The 64s of Joe Hollerbach and Cliff Martin, and Matt and Ben Hollerbach, were records. Even with those record scores other teams were right in the hunt. On Saturday Jim Rohr and Tony Smarrelli came charging to the front and won the tourney, shooting 66-65 for 131. We started a new division for players who totaled 120 years or more. Jim and Tony won that new title as well. From the welcome party Thursday night to the cookout on Saturday everyone had a great time.

MAY

2-3 – Apple City Hickory Open

The 2015 Apple City Winners were Kris Surano (Senior gross), Michael Scott (2nd Place); Stacy Brown (Net Champion, modern), and John Sweeney, the 2015 Apple City Hickory Champion.

The 15th annual Apple City Amateur and Hickory Open was played May 2-3 on the Pajaro Valley Golf Club & Spring Hills Golf Course. Sweeney, not only won the event, but an award named in his honor for his long-time association with Spring Hills and for his playing in the Apple City with hickory long before any hickory flight existed, began. It was the first award he says he won in 20 years of playing hickory events.

17 – Philadelphia Hickory Open

Sixteen players met to debut the Philadelphia Hickory Open on the Jeffersonville Golf Club. Event host was Ari Flaisher. Hardscrabble Country Club pro Jeremy Moe won the day with an even par 71, followed by Bill Geisler at 76, and Jeff Schmidt with 78. Alex Voight-Shelley, 13, drove to the tournament with her father and grandfather from State College, Pa. "She is a marvel to watch with the old equipment so I can only imagine how tough her steel game must be," Flaisher said.

18-20 – World Hickory Match Play

Ben Hollerbach of Chamblee, Ga., earned the 2015 Championship Division title, defeating Claus Muehlfeit in the final match by 4 and 3. The 3rd Place match was won by Cliff Martin, besting defending champion Jeremy Moe, 3 and 2.

In the Players Division, Greg Shayka survived early rounds to face Deal Hudson in the 1st Place match. It came down to a stymie on 18 that Shayka failed to negotiate, giving Hudson the victory. The 3rd Place Players match went to Bill Wardwell, who continued his steady play and was too much for Bill Geisler, who earned fourth place honors for the second year.

22-24 – Wisconsin Gutty Challenge

In this inaugural event, which hopes to fill a gap in the gutty ball tournament season created by the absence of the All American Hickory Open, Greg Smith took the reins, organized his team and planned a great event. Eagle Springs, the host course, is said to be a course frozen in time, just right for gutty play. At the end of play, Steve Simer claimed another gutty championship while host, Greg Smith, captured the Senior Division.

JUNE

7 – Wyandotte Hickory Two-Person Scramble

Played on the Wyandotte Shores Golf Course, the event had 48 players and was won by Jack Mitroka and Keith Pinchback. There was an optional warm up round at the beautiful Grosse Ile Golf Club, which is a 1919 Donald Ross design. All players celebrated at the Captain's Pub which is a favorite local restaurant in Wyandotte.

12-13 – National Hickory Championship

The Champion Golfer for 2015 is Bobby Sly with 161, by seven over runner-up Jim Wilhelm. Katy Goidel is the Women's Champion, and Stephen Basic, the Reserve Division champ with a net 131 over Dave Kastelic at 159. In the Sporting Division, Rick Wolffe bested Frank Rosenzweig. Garrett Beaver took the Junior Division over Marsalis Davis. (Look for full results on the SoHG website.) The event was special for a visit from golf legend Lee Trevino, and from players from Sweden who were visiting the NHC for the first time.

18-20 – Belvedere Hickory Open

Cliff Martin of Los Angeles, Calif., posted a remarkable 143 for a 14-shot victory over Ben Hollerbach for the 2015 title. Paul Fiedorek of Charlevoix, Mich. was the net champ. It was, once again, one of the more pleasing and scenic tournaments on the hickory golf calendar. The Belvedere Golf Club hosts continue to produce red-carpet treatment. (See a full report on the SoHG website.)

WORLD HICKORY GOLF

27-28 – California North/South

Twenty-seven players from seven different states took part. Fourteen players on the North team took on 13 of South California's finest hickory players. The two-man team matches resulted in a tie – 10 ½ points to 10 ½ points. The day closed with the annual Hot Dog BBQ at Lover's Point Park on the beach.

Sunday morning's weather continued with perfect conditions. With the matches over, hickory players would concentrate more on their personal scores for a two-day total. There were 13 players in each division, placed according to handicaps, for a chance to be top dog in the Walter Hagen (5-14 hdcp) and Bobby Jones (15-32 hdcp) divisions. Congrats to Michael Scott, Dan Vordale, and John Sweeney in the Bobby Jones Division; and Steve Henneuse, John Boyd, and John Quickstad in the Walter Hagen Division.

Closest to the pin winners were Larry Sonnenberg, Michael Scott, Dana Niehaus, Doug Richards. Dan Vordale took home the Bogey Award.

JULY

11-12 – Gearhart Hickory Classic

Hosted by the Seattle-based Northwest Hickory Players, 30 hickory players participated in the 2015 Gearhart Hickory Classic at the historic Gearhart Golf Links (est. 1892) on the beautiful Oregon coast. A strong contingent of California players and a Texan joined us for the group's first major event of the year.

During Friday's practice round, we held a fun Ryder Cup-style match with Wash./Ore. against Calif./Texas with the northern side prevailing 7-3 in singles matches and 23-7 in the singles and fourball points competition. Day 1 began with a trade show. In the end, Jim von Lossow ran away with the Open title with a steady 79. In the Senior Division, Galen Peterson came from behind with an 83 to nip three players by one stroke for the Senior title. Liz Keeler won the Women's Division net title. Special mention goes to Stacy Brown from California who shot a fabulous 92, a mere 21 shots better than her Day 1 effort!

10-12 – Heart of America

The 38th Heart of America Hickory Championship was just to John Berggren's liking. The Kingwood, Texas, hickory player and golf collector played the 1902 Grandview Golf Course in Des Moines, Iowa, to a tee, finishing with a 152 to runner-up Gary Swenson's 164. John Hutton took the Senior category with 155, and Max Hollon the Statesman division with 162. This tourney was originated in 1978 by Warren Olson, a past president of the Golf Collectors Society, and is the oldest continuously held hickory championship in the world.

Bill Reed thanked all competitors and did a stand-up job at the award presentations. (See the SoHG website for a complete list of scores and results.)

19-21 – U.S. Hickory Open

Jeremy Moe won his third consecutive U.S. Hickory Open title at the Miami Valley Golf Club of Dayton, Ohio. Moe, the golf professional at Hardscrabble Country Club in Fort Smith, Ark., posted a 143, which was seven clear of his closest competitor, Cliff Martin of Los Angeles, Calif. Tony Smarrelli of Pinehurst, N.C., was the Senior champion with 147. Michael Shiff of Parkland, Fla., took the Super Senior title with 152. Francine Smarrelli, of Pinehurst, N.C., was the Ladies champion. Sally Shiff of Parkland, Fla., took the Ladies net title.

The low amateur score was posted by Cliff Martin, who was given a lovely trophy and award co-sponsored by Tad Moore and Dave Brown. Fourteen-year-old Grayson Giboney of Washington was in the field, a player said by Moe to possess "grit and a strong heart." Young Grayson finished third in the Open division. Miami Valley's president, Neil Hazel, extended an invitation for the SoHG to return in 2019, the year of the club's centennial, for another USHO, as well as a celebration of that anniversary. (See the SoHG website for full results.)

AUGUST

12-14 – Canadian Open Hickory Championship

More than 80 players competed this year at the Legends Golf and Country Club in Sherwood Park. It was the 100th anniversary of the Alberta Amateur Golf Association. The Canadian Hickory Championship is held over three days. There is a money scramble on Wednesday, followed by Canada vs. U.S. matches on Thursday, and the Canadian Hickory Open Championship on Friday. The winners this year are:

- Canadian Hickory Champion – Terry Bader
- Canadian Senior Hickory Champion – Chris Ream
- Canadian Open Ladies Champion – Elizabeth Ream
- Senior Ladies Hickory Champion – Fran Looten
- First Nations Hickory Champion – Ricky Beaudreau
- World Chinese Hickory Champion – Ken Looten

14-15 – Foxburg Hickory Championship

Foxburg, in Western Pennsylvania, was created in 1887, and maintains many of its original features. The Open Division required play with the Park gutty provided by the McIntyre Golf Company, as well as the use of sand tees. Competition was keen among the primary contenders – JW McMath (New Philadelphia, Ohio), Jay Harris (Pinehurst, N.C.), event host Tom Johnson (Tallmadge, Ohio), and 18-year-old Seth Lomison (Winston-Salem, N.C.). It was a truly engaging match (see the SoHG website), but by the end McMath posted a one-stroke victory over Lomison.

The Senior Division were permitted to use the pre-1900 style ball of their choice. Champion honors were captured by Mike Henderson with 171, Ron Taylor was runner-up with 175, followed by Dave Ellis with 176. Super Senior Champion was Jay Harris with a fine score of 168 using the Park ball. Charles Mitchell (Lexington, Ky.) was Super Senior Runner-up with 169, followed by Dan Norstedt (Eau Claire, Wisc.) with 175.

Mike Campailla (Mogadore, Ohio) was the Fownes Division (Post-1900) Champion again this year. Bob Georgiade (Durham, N.C.) earned top Reserve honors, with Greg Smith (DeForest, Wisc.) and Jim Koss (Green Bay, Wisc.) finishing second and third respectively. The 2016 event is scheduled for Aug. 12-13.

9 – Michiana Hickory Open

The 4th annual Michiana Hickory Open on the Warren Golf Course at Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind. was, again, won by Bert Coghill, his fourth straight title here. Nineteen golfers participated, including several who have never played with hickories. Two of them, Pate Brewer and Matt Buckman, claimed the top two Low Net scores in the Open division with a 69 and 77 respectively. Ken Fry, the first golf pro at the Warren Golf Course, claimed the Bronze medal with a 78. In the Senior Division, GCS member Tom Irving claimed the Gold medal with a net 67. Coghill also got the Closest to the Pin prize on No. 3. Joe Bodnar claimed the Longest Putt.

SEPTEMBER

5-7 – C.B. Macdonald Challenge/Eastern Canadian Hickory Championship

Played Saturday at the historic Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Course in Ontario, Canada. Four teams – Team USA, Team Eastern Ontario, Team Western Ontario, and Team International – played 36 holes of match play golf, one day with pre-1900 clubs and one day with post-1900 equipment. Each player played a match against his/her fellow playing partners. One point awarded for each match won.

Team Western Ontario held on to win the C. B. Macdonald Challenge with 45.5 points. In second place was the International team with 40.5 points, followed by Team USA at 37 points and Team Eastern Ontario with 19 points.

The Eastern Canadian Hickory Championship is a 54-hole, three-day event played annually at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Course. A two-day, 36-hole division was also available. Forty-eight hickory enthusiasts played 36 holes of pre-1900 hickory golf and 18 holes of post-1900 golf.

For the two-day event, the Ladies' division champion was Virginia Sunstrum. Frank Rosenzweig was the Super Senior division champ. Michael Campailla won the Senior division. Harold Macdonald (Coburg, Ontario) was the Open division champion.

For the three-day event, Wayne Linton won the Super Senior title. The Senior division was won by Bob McWade. The Open division champion was Tom Johnson (Tallmadge, Ohio) with a 231 total. McWade was declared the overall tournament winner. His 230 total earned him the coveted Jim McNeil trophy.

The 2015 Canadian Gutty Championship was contested by 32 players over 36 holes. Wayne Linton won the Super Senior division. Bob McWade won the Senior division, and Tom Johnson won the Open division.

6 – Wisconsin Hickory Open

The 6th annual Wisconsin Hickory Open (formerly the Kummel Cup) was played over the Links of Lawsonia in Green Lake, Wisc. Steve Simer (Madison, Wisc.) was the overall champion; Dave Brown (Omaha, Neb.) took the Senior Division; Dan Norstedt (Eau Claire, Wisc.) was the Super Senior winner. The tournament opened with a practice round on Thursday and the annual two-man Best ball event. A stunning 58 was turned in by the father/son team of Joe and David Guerard.

12 – McNabb Cup

Played on the Tom Bendelow-designed White Lake Golf Course in Whitehall, Mich. New-to-hickory upstart Jason Shaffer shocked the field of 19 hopefuls at the fifth playing for the legendary McNabb Cup. This is a net event, although The Committee awoke long enough to come up with acknowledgements for the low gross scores. Players were treated to a Friday round on the Donald Ross-designed Muskegon Country Club, a gem of a course. The post-McNabb festivities at the McNabb Cottage were, as customary, best left un-reported.

WORLD HICKORY GOLF

Joseph Bodnar of Wyandotte, Mich. drove in his 2016 Captaincy.
2015 McNabb Cup Champion – Jason Shaffer, Net 70
Runner Up – Larry Pinchback, Net 72 (scorecard playoff)
Third – Tim Stroschine, Net 72
Low Score – Jason Shaffer, 79
Runner Up – Scott Staudacher, 83
Third – Hugh Cameron, 84

12-13 – Iowa Hickory Classic

Bill Reed reports: The 9th edition of this Midwest hickory tournament changed venues from the 1910 Hyperion course by Tom Bendelow to the 1901 Waveland Golf Course in Des Moines, also by Bendelow. It is the oldest municipal golf course west of the Mississippi River.

Open Medal Champion: Gary Youngberg.....Ames, Iowa.....72
Open Reserve Champion: Larry Krebsbach.....Lincoln, Neb.....67
Senior Medal Champion: Chris Hardy.....Port Byron, Ill.....75
Senior Reserve Champ: Ray Gustafson.....Des Moines, Iowa.....58
Ladies Medal Champion: Jeanne Swenson.....Kelley, Iowa.....93
Ladies Reserve Champion: Chris Shanahan.....Shelby, Neb.....87
Statesman Medal Champion: Russell Fisher.....Des Moines, Iowa.....93
Statesman Reserve Champ: Charles Mulligan.....Haigler, Neb.....71
Scramble Champs: John Piffer, John Overton, & grandson Jackson Overton all of Indianola, Iowa.....61
Scramble 2nd Place: Duane Baylor, Ron Luster of Omaha, Neb. teamed with Gary Grimes & Dean Townsend of Des Moines, Iowa.....70

18 – GCS Hickory Championship

Played on the Pheasant Run Golf Course in St. Charles, Ill. Stormy weather threatened but did not break on a pleasant day at Pheasant Run. Playing in the outing was Hollis Stacy, a three-time U.S. Women's Open champion, who also was keynote speaker at the annual meeting.

Scramble Division – 1st – John Capers III, Jim Jeselnik, Hollis Stacy, and Ed Ronco; 2nd – Donna Brown, Bryant Murphy, and Glenn Moore, Joe DeWulf and Micah Bosman; 3rd (tiebreaker) – Duane Baylor, Stuart Bendelow, Mike West, and Jeff Wu

Open Division – John Berggren (1st), Jack Crosby (2nd), Bill Keischer (3rd)

Open Net – Mike Marquart (1st), Jeff Warkenthein (2nd),

and Marius Kucinas (3rd)

Senior Open – John Hutton (1st), Richard Phinny (2nd), Paul Adams (3rd)

Senior Net – Brad Baird (1st), Clayton Copple (2nd), Jim Davis (3rd)

Statesman Open – Bill Reed (1st), Pete League (2nd), Russ Fisher (3rd)

Statesman Net – Wayne Aaron (1st), George Penry (2nd), Gary Albers (3rd)

19-20 – Pacific Northwest Hickory Championship

The Northwest Hickory Players conducted its inaugural Pacific Northwest Hickory Championship and Trade Show over the historic Foster Golf Links in Tukwila, Wash., and the Chandler Egan-designed West Seattle Golf Course. In a thrilling finish Jim von Lossow of Seattle edged Scott Miller of Issaquah by a single shot with a fine score of 148 (73-75) in the Open Division.

Rob Ahlschwede of Olympia was the champion of the Senior Division and Roberta Robbins of Kenmore was the champion of the Women's Division. Martin Pool was the net champion in Open Division, Steve Franich in the Senior Division, and Paula Anderson in the Women's Division. Thanks also to Peter Yagi, world-renowned purveyor of fine golf books, who hosted a Trade Show at his house.

26 – Washington State Hickory Open

Played on the Home Course in Dupont, Wash. Durel Billy reports: Fresh off his come-from-behind Pacific Northwest Hickory Championship win Jim von Lossow set a new Home Course hickory record of 75 to win the event. He was paired with the 2014 champion, Grayson Giboney (who shot 83), and seven-time champion, Colin Gants (who shot 82).

Ladies Champion Paula Anderson – 114
Novice Champion Torrin Westwood – 86
Senior Champion Galen Petersen – 86
Auld Golf Society Champion Barry Field – 90

26-27 – Virginia Hickory 4-Ball

The 6th annual Virginia Hickory 4-Ball Championship of the Virginia Hickory Players was held at Lake Monticello in Palmyra, Va. Chris Farris and Jim Saunders were the winning team. See the SoHG website for a link to a YouTube video of the event.

OCTOBER

3 – Wyandotte Hickory Open, 5th annual

The Wyandotte Hickory Open had its best attendance since its inception in 2011 when we had only six players. Many players enjoyed a pre-WHO round at the Grosse Ile Golf Club. This year 40 players teed off in heavy winds and cold. Gusts of 30 to 40 miles per hour created havoc with the scores. Two players battled for the top prize finishing with a more than respectable 76 and 78. Canadian Hugh Cameron won with 4 over par, and Flint resident Jason Schaffer took a worthy second place. Bill Ellington took the third place medal. Winners in the other divisions were: Ed Ronco, Senior division; Max Hollon, Statesman division; and Kris Ellington in the Ladies division.

9-11 – Fall Hickory Classic

The inaugural Fall Hickory Classic hosted by the U.S. Hickory Players Club debuted at the Mimosa Hills Golf & Country Club in Morganton, N.C. Some 34 players turned out for the opening, which featured a round of stableford scoring (Day 1), four ball/alternate shot (Day 2), and individual and team play (Day 3). Friday's stableford match was won by Joe Hollerbach with 29, Rick Woeckener in second and Steve Herron in third. In the two-person alternate shots, it was Mark Hollingsworth and Mike Henderson winning the day. The Four-Person team event was taken by Andy Moye, Deal Hudson, Mark Hollingsworth, and Jay Harris. The individual stroke play honors went to Rick Woeckener with 77, Mark Hollingsworth, also at 77, and Deal Hudson with 80.

24-25 – CHGA Hickory Haggis Cup

Played on the the Southern Pines Elk's course in North Carolina. The 2015 Hickory Haggis, the annual match play competition of the Carolina Hickory Golf Association, was Bill "Lang Willie" Engelson's last event as Captain of the group. The Haggis includes four nine-hole matches per participant. At tournament's end, Gary Podlogar hoisted the trophy, followed by R.C. Butler, and Andrea Hodel in third. Andrea was the lone woman in the field. Afterward, the players assembled in the grill to toast the outgoing CHGA Captain.

NOVEMBER

5-7 – Interstate Championship

Peter Herrington reports: Played at the Old Kinderhook Golf Club in Camden, Mo. Beautiful warm, sunny weather both days, and the usual splendid hospitality of Fred and Sherry Smeltzer, and their generous donation of hickory putters made by Fred and embroidered hats and towels by Sherry. John Hutton and Patti Pittinger won the Couples 9 hole event on the Thursday; Sherry Smeltzer the Ladies event, and the Men's event was a repeat win for Missouri's Mike Marquart & Lendell Phelps with 87 points. Jeff Smith and Alan Whitson from Arkansas were second with 84 points, playing the course for the first time. Scott Pilgrim and Mike Myrick from Texas were 3rd with 81 points.

6-8 – GCS Region 9 California Hickory Open

Eddie Breeden reports: The 2015 CA Hickory Open held at the 1930 San Clemente GC enjoyed beautiful sunny Southern California weather. 24 players braved the tough weather and playing conditions with SPF 50 and sun glasses.

Saturday's round was a two-man scramble match play, with Auld Golf rules. The ball was played down, stymies were in effect. Many of the matches went the distance. Saturday night's tournament dinner at the OC Tavern was punctuated by a rocket shot from a submarine from the Pacific in the star-lite night sky. This was all followed by room trading and a hallway putting contest.

On Sunday, for stroke play, we had 14 Senior golfers, two Open, and eight in the Gutter division. Kris Surano shot 77 for the Open title; Ken Holtz took the Senior title and Rudy Kastelic the Senior Net. Eddie Breeden won the Gutter division and Bob Wolfensperger Gutter Net.

6-8 – Mid Pines Hickory Open

Played on the Mid Pines Golf Course in Southern Pines, N.C. Cliff Martin of Los Angeles, Calif., took the 2015 title in a playoff with Mark Hollingsworth of West End, N.C. Both men turned in a two-day total of 151. Andrea Hodel of Southern Pines, N.C., bested Barbara Kopec of Niceville, Fla., by seven strokes for the Ladies title. Frank Flood was the Net champion with 137, followed by Joe Hollerbach at 146. The Senior champ was Tony Smarrelli with 146; second was Hugh Cameron with 154. Senior Net champ was Dave Dickman with 134, followed by Bill Wardwell with 141. Super Senior winner was Charles Mitchell Jr. with 168, and in second was Michael Shiff with 169. The Super Senior Net winner was Bill Engelson with 151, and in second was David Farrar with 153. Ladies champion for 2015 was Andrea Hodel with 185, followed by Barb Kopec with 192. The Net Ladies champion was Robert Robbins with 155. Mark Hollingsworth and Jim Rohr won the Friday Foursomes with a 77. Bill Martin & Frank Flood were the net winners with 69.

The Cup runneth over for McNabbians

Editor's note – The players and organizers of the McNabb Cup, played annually in September at the White Lake Golf Club in Whitehall, Mich., are nothing if not spiritually akin to both Walter Mitty and Sancho Panza. If they are not dreaming of glory or tilting at windmills in the form of duck ponds and mighty oaks, they are sporting and good-natured about their game, but quite serious about their admiration for the Cup's original winner, Ms. Isabel McNabb of Grand Rapids, Mich, who won the now-famous trophy in 1922. Mr. John Fisher III, of Cincinnati, Ohio, who has followed reports of this contest for the past two or three years, was moved to pen the following account having channeled, apparently, the awful ire, indignation, admiration, and sympathy of golf's greatest legends re The Cup.

BY JOHN FISCHER III

Given the increasing standard of play at the celebrated McNabb Cup at White Lake GC in western Michigan, it is not surprising that many noted golfers, including those who have left us for a place where there's no rough and all putts go in, have watched with interest and circulated comments on the personalities and their play.

Prior to the start of play, Alistair Cooke set the tone for the tournament, with the sage quip, "Golf is an open exhibition of overweening ambition, courage deflated by stupidity and skill soured by a whiff of arrogance."

Bob Jones commented, "There's golf and then there's tournament golf," knowing well the pressure on the players. P.G. Wodehouse admitted that he had based his character, Archibald Mealing, on the *Wee Nip* correspondent, MacDuff, "whose golf was a kind of blend of hockey, Swedish drill and buck-and-wing dancing." And like Archibald in *Archibald's Benefit*, MacDuff had won a tournament under curious circumstances.

The noted poet and humorist, A.P. Herbert, watched play with a keen eye and noted, "Men who would face torture without a word become blasphemous at the [Schmidt Hole]. It is clear that the game of golf may well be included in that category of intolerable provocations which may legally excuse or mitigate behavior not otherwise excusable." And it should be noted that this same Schmidt, who had made a few subtle changes to the hole bearing his name, avoided playing claiming his invitation had been mislaid.

Watching the WHO (Wyandotte Hickory Organization) representatives take on the infamous 14th, and the reedy water which required sharp play to avoid, Bob Jones couldn't help saying, "The difference between a sand trap and water hazard is the difference between a car crash and an airplane crash. You have a chance of recovering from a car crash."

The pressure of "nabbing," if you will, the McNabb Cup, caused a few contestants to unthinkingly throw a club, but Jones excused their action with a literary flourish saying, "Some emotions cannot be endured with a golf club in your hands," to which Ol' Tom Bolt, who knew a thing or two about throwing clubs, added, "They throw their clubs backwards, and that's wrong. You should always throw a club ahead of you so that you don't have to walk any extra distance to get it." Welcome advice, that.

Lee Trevino, alive and well, slipped away from his self-imposed exile at The Greenbrier, and reported to a gaggle of reporters at the open bar that three of the players were "one under!" As the reporters tossed back their beverages and headed to the course – some confused because they had never actually seen the White Lake track and were writing their copy by watching the Golf Channel and wondering how two South Korean girls could be leading the McNabb competition – only to have Trevino shout as the reporters rushed out, "Yes, one under...one under a tree, one under a bush and one under the water!"

And so the McNabb Cup came to a close with Horace Hutchinson summing up the day's play, "If profanity had an influence on the flight of the ball, the game of golf would be played far better than it is."

And as the players withdrew from the field, P.G. Wodehouse quoted from one of his stories words only a true golfer could appreciate: " 'After all, golf is only a game,' said Millicent. Women say these things without thinking. It does not mean that there is a kink in their character. They simply don't realize what they are saying." 🍷



Noo! An example of the awful pressure of the McNabb Cup where golfing glory hangs in the balance on every crucial shot. This chip failed to drop and "Pinch" must return in 2016, his hopes for a McNabb Cup victory, a must on any serious hickory golfer's resume, rekindled with the quiet, dignified fury that burns achingly in the breast of every worthy McNabb contender.



A quiet walk, a lost ball, an unsung hero

*The grave unites; where e'en the great find rest,
And blended lie th' oppressor and th' oppressed.*

Alexander Pope: Windsor Forest, 1713

BY MACDUFF

It is my habit to, occasionally, when the faithful golfing companion can not be found because of business or family or any of the other thousand slings and arrows, to shoulder my bag and set off for a brisk walk round the local muni.

Tree-lined and old, built around 1927, it sees much use – and abuse, unfortunately, but has survived and for those who love it and care for it, has come through and even improved. Its current manager is an experienced hand who has been around golf for many years and knows a thing or two about the business. He keeps the tees tidy, reminds the players to replace divots and ball marks, and has somehow secured the services of a groundskeeper who has brought the greens up to a standard usually reserved for the private country club.

So, with a bag of hickories, I find it immensely satisfying to walk round on my own, testing the clubs for their indifference to my swing or the happy confluence of rhythm and timing that appeals to their unforgiving natures.

As I noted, when addressing the Ladies of a local Club on the subject of modern play with hickory clubs, I am most *“decidedly under the spell of, in my hands, these most feminine of golf clubs. For, when treated well and with respect, when listened to, these most mysterious and alluring of clubs are more than the best of friends, they are as sweet lovers whose skillful approach shots settle wonderfully and gently upon the waiting green.”*

The Ladies applauded even if, in reading these lines in retrospect, I wonder at my cheek in saying them at all. Still, the old clubs do seem to evince a feminine character and respond well, as do most of us for that matter, to confident and fair treatment.

The old muni is not the most challenging of tracks, nor is it the most heroic in terms of vista or layout or pedigree; nor, thankfully, does it need be. It is not long and is to be shortened under a current program that will reduce its length and see the routing modified, at the loss of three of the original holes, to make room for a driving range and short game practice area.

Well, the course must make money to justify its existence to a City that has occasionally attempted to turn it into ghastly strip malls and condos. So, if the modification guarantees its survival, I am all for it.

A large city cemetery borders the golf course. Early city fathers once considered that the golf course might give way to cemetery needs should expansion of the eternal resting grounds prove necessary. Thankfully, this has not proven the case. (A rise in the popularity, if that is the word, of cremations might be the reason.)

The eighth hole, a shortish par 4, but brutally narrow and lined by tall oaks, is bordered along the entire right side by the cemetery and a low, split rail fence. The quiet residents of this land are often visited by golfers whose slices somehow miss the stately oaks and wind up here and there among the grave markers or under the low branches of the spruce trees.

A solitary golfer, prone by nature to contemplative studies on

**‘Red Tails’
Brings Unsung Heroes Back To The Forefront**

Colonel Faite Mack Sr.
Before retiring and moving to Grand Rapids, Colonel Mack was in military service for 35 years

**By RaeNosa Hadnell
The Grand Rapids Times**

The recent release of the movie *Red Tails* in late January brought Black History to the spotlight before February. In spite of the mixed reviews the film has received, one thing that is certain is that movie has brought the Tuskegee Army Airfield to national consciousness. *Red Tails* is more than just a movie title that flickers across thousands of movie screens. The name belongs to a noble group of individuals that were brave enough to withstand prejudice. They were the first African American military aviators, mechanics, and ground crew serving in a time where their capabilities and intellect were questioned. Using planes colored with red tails, the airmen shot down more than 100 German aircraft during WWII between 1943-1945. The heroes and servicemen of the country that they were, the U.S. military failed to treat them as equals the same as they did whites military service. The Tuskegee Airmen's accomplishments are now being celebrated in *Red Tails*. The film has attracted all audiences from elders, young children and even people who never knew anything about the Tuskegee Airmen, one of whom resided in Grand Rapids for many years. Colonel Faite Mack Sr. former Tuskegee Airman of the 99th, first-squadron black combat fighter pilots in World War II was one of two airmen that lived in West Michigan. Colonel Mack died in 2002 but is remembered by his family and those in Grand Rapids as dedicated men that served his community and country. "He enjoyed being in the service," said Colonel Mack's son Warrant Officer Phillip Mack. "He didn't say much, but he talked about some of the racism he experienced during that time." Colonel Mack and other airmen faced racism all while they served during WWII. It was not until President Harry Truman desegregated the armed services in 1948, that African American's in the service were treated as equals. Before retiring and moving to Grand Rapids, Colonel Mack was in military service for 35 years traveling to many countries such as North Africa and to places in Europe. In Grand Rapids he held many positions in the community. Among his honors are the Giants among Giants Award. He is also listed in Who's Who in Black America. Colonel Faite Mack, Sr. will most remembered by the legacy of education he stressed to his family. "He always stressed the importance of education to my siblings and me," Warrant Officer Mack said. "It is something we have kept with us and that will continue throughout our family." From the film *Red Tail* people will now be able to learn about the untold heroes of WWII. Although a film by this generation is not nearly enough recognition for the great Tuskegee Airmen, it is a start. The lessons about our unsung heroes must continue.

THE FOLKS YOU MEET. An article from the February 2012 edition of the Grand Rapids Times honors Col. Faite Mack Sr. The author came upon the grave marker of the former Tuskegee Airman while searching for a lost golf ball.

coaxing recovery shots from a sleepy mid iron, cannot but be sobered on this hole by the reminder of the mortal dues that must be paid at the end of our larger earthly round.

I have sent a few errant shots across the bow of this cemetery border and not a few moments looking here and there for the strays. While looking, I would read the names on the stones and ponder how their owners also came to rest here in this shady corner along a golf hole.

So it happened that I came upon a marker that was larger than its neighbors, its inscription bold and set off by carved images of WWII fighter planes on either side of the name. Here lay one Col. Faite Mack Sr. I do not think he will mind me sharing his name. He was a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, a fighter squadron of black pilots who wished to serve at a time when discrimination did not allow them to be placed within white-dominated units.

The Tuskegee Airmen fought with distinction, downing more than 100 enemy fighters during the war. Their P-51 fighters were painted with red tails. A 2012 Hollywood movie, *“Red Tails,”* gave much deserved recognition to their service.

Col. Mack served for some 35 years with the Airmen before he retired and then continued to serve his community in a variety of ways.

And I had the honor of meeting him because I fozzled a golf ball his way. Well, you meet the nicest people playing golf and here was no exception. The one of us still wearing his mortal coil had the greater honor of the occasion – the one a duffer, the other a distinguished veteran and community leader.

Nowadays, I tip a cap to him each time I pass this way, thankfully mostly on the fairway than on his front porch. ☺



EQUIPMENT CARE & MAINTENANCE

Storing clubs for the season

Golf Clubs and How to Use Them, by Edward Ray, 1922, got your humble editor to thinking about how we store our clubs. Ray noted that the clubs need a little TLC before you put them away for the season. He advocated linseed oil followed by a coat of varnish. I had always heard that oils of any kind are not so good for the old hickory shafts. Thus, we posed the question to a number of modern day hickory club repair/restoration experts for their wisdom on just what to do to ready your clubs for storage.

They are not always in 100 percent agreement, but you will get an idea of the procedures they hold in common and the one's they believe are most important.

*From Tad Moore
Tad Moore Hickory Classics
Selma, Ala.*

Problems occur when clubs are stored in hot and dry conditions. Heat/dry will harden leather and shrink shafts. I always kept mine in the bag, standing up. I would not stand them individually against a wall. If your house is hot/dry, store the clubs in outside storage. Cold won't hurt them.

In the spring take each club out and check the hosel fit. If it is not tight, reset the head. Next, take a clean rag and clean the shaft with a solvent such as acetone. Next with a fine grit – 100 – foam pad, **lightly** sand the shaft surface. Next, put a spray coat of Min Wax Helmsman Spar Urethane on the shaft. This is a fantastic finish, and eliminates the need for any oil. Finally, take Lexol spray and clean the grips. Ready to go.

I am not a fan of oils on hickory as I think it tends to break down the wood fibers. If someone insists on using oil, go with boiled linseed oil and no other.

*From Gary Eley
Hickory Golf Workshop
Burlington, Vt.*

It is important to remember that moisture is a hickory club's worst nightmare. Please don't leave them in your garage (unless it is heated). Any extreme



BASEMENT STORAGE such as this might be okay, if the temperature and humidity are controlled. This owner has taken to lying his clubs flat on racks.

change in temperature is bad for the wood shaft. It is also good to add a coat of "Tru-Oil" to the shaft before putting your clubs away. Tru-Oil is made for gun stocks and it leaves a good waterproof surface on the shaft and does not require the use of a spray or a brush. You can put some on your fingers and just rub it on the shaft.

Linseed oil, shellac and varnish, are not recommended.

Oil will make the hickory too limber and will seep into the fiber of the wood, loosening the natural bonds between the wood fibers that are created by the natural "sap" that is in hickory wood.

Varnish will build up on the shaft and chip, as will shellac.

Shellac is also dissolved by moisture.

Moisture can rust the steel heads, so damp and cold garages, basements or attics are not a good storage place.

I clean my steel heads with WD-40 and

a scrub pad. You can coat a thin layer of WD-40 on the head for the winter. It also works well in the golf season when you need to clean your clubs or if some rust has formed due to playing in wet grass or in the rain.

Think of your hickory shaft like you would a guitar, it needs moderate temperature, around 60 to 70 degrees and moderate humidity, around 50 percent is a good goal.

Now, how to store: I prefer laying the clubs down. This can be done on a rack, or can be done in your bag if you lay your bag sideways. Standing the clubs up in a warm and average humidity room has also worked for me. My downstairs den is heated and I have many clubs resting in vertical racks on my walls. But horizontal resting is the safest. I actually prefer the horizontal racks on the walls for hanging.

From Mike Just
Louisville Golf
Louisville, Ky.

When I put my hickories away for the winter, I want them in a condition where they are ready to go when the first round is played in the spring.

- I clean the heads and make sure all grit and dirt is removed.
- I check the whipping on the woods and the whipping on the grips to make sure all is in good order. If not, apply new whipping where needed.
- Apply a new coat of shellac/varnish/polyurethane to the shafts. I don't know where the linseed oil not being good came from, but what the linseed oil does is penetrates the fibers of the shaft, where the other finishes lay on the surface. I don't know if the linseed oil can soften the fibers and change the stiffness of the shaft. But I avoid linseed oil because the shellac/varnish/polyurethane do a better job at providing a moisture barrier.
- I prefer to lay the clubs flat on the ground as opposed to standing them up. I think if a shaft had a tendency to warp, it would have less pressure in the flat position and less likely to warp.
- Where you store the clubs is as important as everything else. You definitely don't want to store them near a heat source. There is moisture in all wood. Wood picks up moisture during the humid summer and loses moisture during the dry winter. The purpose of the finish on the shaft is to impede the absorption and loss of moisture. You want to avoid the extremely dry or damp environment when storing your hickory clubs.

These are just my opinions based on my experience.

From Randy Jensen
Hickory golf champion and
author of "Playing Hickory Golf"
Omaha, Neb.

I like to keep my hickory clubs in heated indoor storage for the winter. The moisture levels in the shaft should remain around 10 percent, so if the shaft has an unbroken seal, I will add a coat of shellac (a lacquer finish can also be an option); if a shaft looks a bit dried out, I will add a thick coat of tung oil that I allow to remain on the shaft overnight. If in doubt, there are gauges on the market that will measure the level of moisture in your shaft.

If you have any iron heads with a tendency to oxidize, you can remove the

Preparing the hickory golfer for the winter

Stretch headgear for additional swing thoughts generated over the winter's researches.

New plus-fours to replace those torn hunting ball in the brambles.

Darn stockings or find new matched set of argyles to go with new pants. Apply to legs before first spring outing.

Clean shoes and refresh waterproofing.

New logo tie for important club matches.

Rub stiff muscles with linaments and oils to restore suppleness (or lock in a supply of ibuprofen or similar balms).

Generous applications of single malt whiskeys to renew sense of hope, dedication to curing slice or elimination of fozzled chip shots.

New mid iron... or mashie, or jigger, or putter, or niblick, or...

Read Simpson's Art of Golf, and Browning's A History of Golf to revitalize sense of tradition.

Watch Bobby Jones instructional videos. It couldn't hurt.



oxidation and apply a thin coat of oil; I use olive oil. Your wood clubheads should be examined to determine if the seal has been broken anywhere (or everywhere). Your options to reseal the clubhead can be tung oil – which works great for the face; shellac – not recommended for the face because it chips off quickly; or a lacquer spray – but make sure it is compatible with the previous finish.

I would also check the tightness of the whipping on your woods and examine all clubs very closely for any cracks or damage that you may have missed during the season especially in the necks of your woods. Also, make sure all clubheads are tight to the shafts.

Grips can be treated or replaced during this time as well. I've been using "Tiger Stick"* on my grips for its exceptional adhesive strength.

During the hickory era, it was recommended to lay the clubs flat to eliminate any long-term storage stress that could have an influence on warping a shaft.

**Tiger Stick is the brand name for a compound that is sold in a tube and marketed to baseball players as an alternative to pine tar. The tacky finish is said to improve one's grip on the club.*

From Rob Ahlschwede
SoHG Equipment Chair
Olympia, Wash.

Linseed oil actually enters the wood

fibers and they begin to break down – weakens the shaft over time. The absorbed oil also changes the club weight and swing weight over time. Sealing the wood against moisture is the most important – shellac, spar varnish, some use poly. First rub the old finish – steel wool – then wipe the dust, then add the finish you desire. Next in importance is how and where you store them. Warm, dry place, but not hot (no furnace room) and lying flat. Clubs stored upright – in a bag or in the corner, etc. have a greater chance of warping.

But, the best is not to put them away, but just continue playing. What's a little snow anyway, eh???

From Jay Harris
Hickory champion, club restoration
expert, and club rental supplier
Pinehurst, N.C.

The enemy of the golf shaft is losing its moisture. Hot, dry attic weather is a real culprit. Living in the South I have not worried about the cold, but I would think low cold weather climate cannot be good for the shafts. So temperature and humidity controlled climate in the winter would be good. Laying the clubs flat would be ideal I would think. Shellac seals in the natural moisture of the shaft. Whenever the shaft starts to lose its shine, I would suggest a light shellac. Maybe not necessary every year.

continued next page



Club storage

From David Ramos
Wood craftsman, hickory club restoration Marshall, Mich.

As far as winter storage I do as little as possible. I like to keep up maintenance throughout the year. The three things I recommend before storage are:

First, make sure your shafts have a good finish on them. I use laquer, but shellac or polyurethane is fine. Sealing the grip end of the shaft is good also. A good finish won't eliminate moisture from a shaft, but it will slow the process.

Second, to prevent rust from forming on clubs, I use a block of beeswax. I clean up the heads some steel wool, then warm them with a heat source, just enough to melt the wax. I rub some wax all over the clubheads, give them a good coating. This keeps the softest metals from forming a lot of winter rust. Warm them up in the spring and wipe them off.

Third, I find a nice spot for storage. I don't think the position that you store them is that important, just make sure they are not stressed by stacking them on top of each other. A nice warm closet or, in my case, lying on a dining room table or leaning against a living room wall should be fine. Never know when you want to swing 'em.

From Ron Luster
Hickory club restoration expert, and master woodworker, retired engineer Bellevue, Neb.

(Ron hopes to follow up his information on club storage with articles on how to tune up a playset with regard to balance (swing weight), heft (total weight), and springiness (frequency). "They are interesting topics," he says. – Editor)

Preparing hickory clubs for winter seems to have a lot of "Old Wives Tales" associated with it. Such as: always stand the clubs with the head down; always stand the clubs with the head up, always lay the clubs down on a flat surface; always hang the clubs horizontally; or always hang the clubs vertically by either the head or grip. And then you should apply linseed oil to the shafts or tung oil, or varnish them. And then you are supposed to apply machine oil to the heads, or is it heavy oil? No. Maybe it was to wax both the shafts and heads. Maybe it is all of the above.

Without passing comment on the above, I approach winterizing differently. I try to eliminate or reduce the things I find when I wake the clubs up in the spring. The things I find are some warpage of shafts, a little fine red surface rust on the heads, and rarely a head loosened from the shaft.

Crooked shafts are caused by temperature and moisture changes and those changes are significant in the winter. Wood is a very mobile thing. For

most of history houses creaked, floors squeaked, cabinet doors warped, and furniture cracked because of moisture and temperature changes.

Red, powdery rust is caused by the same changes. Just as a cold glass of iced tea sweats in the summer, a cold steel golf club head sweats in the winter. The magnitude is much less but the minimal surface dampness does cause mild rust.

Loose heads during winter are caused by the different expansion rates of the wood shaft and the steel head during winter's variation in temperature and the shrinkage of the wood from low humidity.

An interesting effect of this seasonal shaft drying is that a club will measure a couple of swing weights more at the end of winter than the end of summer. The dryer shaft weighs less and the steel head is not changed. Swing weight, being a relative measure of head weight versus shaft weight, measures higher.

Now that we know what to prevent during the winter, here's what I do.

Look at the shafts for scratches which leave the wood exposed and touch it up. I use polyurethane on my playset and for touch-ups I spray a little into the can lid and apply it with a cotton swab. I put a light coat of gun oil on the heads.

Finally, I put my clubs into temperature and humidity controlled living space, not left in the trunk of the car, or in the furnace room, the garage, or in any basement or area that is not an environmentally controlled living space. ☺

In quest of a cure... the slice

From Jim Clawson
Charlottesville, Va.

Many of us fight a slice. We've read hundreds of ways to fight it. A recent lesson from my local pro was helpful.

1) Take the club back on target line outside your hands, NOT inside.

2) At the top, rotate your shoulders away from target line and

3) Begin the downswing with a tiny bump to the left dropping your hands into the "slot" and the club under an imaginary shaft in the ground at 45 degrees (it was a real one during the lesson).

4) Swing from "6:30 out to 1:00 on the clock face" where 12:00 is the target line. Do this three times, then hit a ball. Repeat 20 minutes a day for 10 days.

In the first lesson, I was hitting draws, something I'd never done before, and old

habits are hard to break. Don't forget to turn your hands over, or you get a double-cross, push to the right. I had been taking it back inside thinking "one plane swing" inside to inside to inside out. Wrong, backwards.

All this is for what's it's worth. It's a work in process for me. For some it comes so easily.

From Ronald Ross
Great Britain, curedmygolfslice.com

In his quest to eliminate the dreaded slice from the game of golf, Ronald Ross of Great Britain has created a website – curedmygolfslice.com – which he has packed with innumerable tips from Harry Vardon to Sam Snead and many more. It is a busy website, with dozens of photos in a hodgepodge of images, but the main

body of information is easy enough to follow. There is plenty to digest here, so best to take it in small doses. Experiment with this tip or that to see what works. The work that Ross has done to assemble information from the many golf professionals makes the site worth a visit. The initial page is a bit confusing, as there seems no entry into the rest, but click on the main image and you'll get to the good stuff.

Examples include:

- Timing Of The Stroke (1900) By Horace H. Hutchinson
- Some Peculiar Kind Of "Snap" (1905) By Harry Vardon
- The Golfing Swing Explanatory (1911) By J. H. Taylor
- The Amount of Cut Used (1913) by Joshua Taylor
- You Must Learn To Do This (1964) By Henry Cotton.
- And Alex Smith on the "snap of the wrists" (1907). ☺



MEMBER PROFILE

Dave Ramos *Marshall, Michigan USA*

Dave Ramos is one of the stalwart stars on the Michigan Hickory Tour. The Marshall, Mich., native has a sweet swing and a great game.

“Golf was an early interest, even before I got on a golf course,” he says. “When I was in sixth grade my brother bought me a used set of junior golf clubs. I’ve been an avid golfer since.”

After graduating high school, Ramos attended Montana State University for his freshman year because “I loved to fly fish and loved the mountains. In fact, I loved them so much it was tough to attend classes. So I decided to finish up at Michigan State.”

While at MSU, Ramos spent a study abroad semester with a local family in Kathmandu, Nepal, exploring the country and the culture. “It was a great experience,” he says. He graduated with a bachelors in anthropology, then treated himself to a bit more travel, spending the new millennium New Year’s Eve in Moscow, Russia, followed by a month-long journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway, finishing in Beijing.

Ramos returned to Montana, working as a wrangler and elk hunting guide. He has also been a painter, carpenter, and woodworker. He is currently employed as a supervisor by Firekeepers Casino in Battle Creek, Mich.

“I got into hickories about five years ago,” Ramos says. “It was my love of woodworking and golf history, that led me into this great sport. I had an idea to try and replicate a set of long nose clubs. Though I didn’t find much information on the construction methods of these clubs, I did discover the Society of Hickory Golfers and Ralph Livingston’s wonderful website. A few phone calls and emails later, and I hooked up with the Michigan group of hickory golfers.”

When work permits, Dave plays regularly with the Michigan guys and has occasionally brought his nephew, Garrett, with him. (Garrett, by the way, was featured, along with other young hickory stars, in the Autumn 2014 edition of the *Wee Nip*.)

How often do you play hickories?

I have been playing hickories exclusively for four years now. I’ve taken my moderns to the range a couple of times, I just can’t get used to them anymore.

What’s in your play set?

I have a set of Stewarts I like to use for casual play. For tournaments I’ve assembled a set of Kro-flites that I really like.

Tournament Set:

Driver - Wright and Ditson
Brassie - A.J. Spalding Bros.
Mid-Iron - Kroydon J-8
3-9 Irons - Spalding Kro-flite
Niblick - Kroydon P-8
Putter - MacGregor OA

Favorite club?

My Wright and Ditson driver. I just really like the feel when it is well struck. The click it makes is very satisfying.



Dave Ramos and favorite hickory partner, his nephew, Garrett.

What ball do you play?

I play the Callaway Supersoft. It’s consistent and has great feel.

Favorite course for hickories?

I enjoy playing hickories anywhere, but I my favorite course is the course I grew up on, Alwyn Downs Golf course in Marshall, Mich. The 1921 course is almost obsolete for modern players, but plays perfectly for hickories. Small push up greens make it perfect for the hickory game.

Favorite hickory tournament?

Without a doubt Mid Pines. I just think it’s a first-class tournament, played on a great course, in one of the nicest places in the U.S.

Any particular player or aspect of golf history you especially enjoy?

*I really enjoy learning about early American golf and the professionals. I think that is why I have an affinity for American-made golf equipment. It’s nice to be able to link a club with a certain professional and golf club. Course architecture and agronomy are also fascinating to me. The most recent book I’ve read is the *Bulletin of the USGA greens section*. It is a must read for anyone wanting to learn about course management in the 1920s.*

Best thing about hickory golf?

It’s the lack of expectation. It’s just fun to swing a hickory. It’s nice to hold a hickory, and great just to look at a hickory. Sometimes, the last thing you’re worried about is hitting a great shot. When you do it is just a bonus, a great experience.

Ideas to promote hickory golf?

Although I do get many questions about my hickories when I show up at the course, not many people ask to play with them. I don’t think people realize the good golf that can be played with hickories. I think more people would try them if they were made more accessible. I always let everyone who shows interest in my clubs know that I have extra sets and that they are welcome to play with me anytime. I think this grassroots approach is one of the best ways to spread knowledge of our game. Hickory events at local golf clubs also are great ways to encourage new players.



FINAL SHOTS



DETERMINATION AND FOCUS

Hickory golfers in Europe have their eyes on young Louis Dudzus of Potsdam, Germany who, at 9 years old, is one of the youngest, if not the youngest, hickory golfers in Europe. At right, Louis blasts from the sand on the Royal Golf Club Marianske Lazne during the Czech Hickory Open in February. He plays at the Golf- und Land-Club Berlin-Wannsee with his father, Olaf, who is the Honorary Secretary of the German Hickory Golf Society. Louis also played this September in the German Hickory Open where he placed third in the net competition with a 63. This was in a field of 54 players.

PHOTOS/ZDENEK SLUKA

