

An Old International Match

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INAUGURAL GOLF MATCH

21 May 1898

Played on the links of the Royal Montreal Golf Club

THE COUNTRY CLUB	ROYAL MONTREAL GOLF CLUB
S. H. Bennett	Rev. J. R. Dobson
H. C. Leeds	F. J. Stancliffe
L. Curtis	A. A. Wilson
G. T. Rice	G. W. Macdougall
H. C. Ernst	Rev. J. Barclay
L. A. Frothingham	J. R. Meeker
H. Jaques	J. Taylor
Q. A. Shaw, Jr.	K. R. Macpherson
G. H. Windeler	W. W. Watson
F. I. Amory	W. J. S. Gordon
31	19

The Country Club won by 12 holes.

Weather very hot and bright.

This is probably the first international club match ever played in America

The above record may be found in the annals of The Country Club, Brookline, Mass. The casual observer might give the report a quick glance and pass on to up-to-date news. On the other hand, the footnote would strike the eye of the old-timer or one interested in the development of golf in this country.

The old-timer, looking back at the names, would immediately recognize Curtis, Windeler, Jaques and Leeds: "Why, these men were among the founders and developers of United States golf".

Laurence Curtis was the first Vice-President of the USGA and succeeded to the Presidency, which office he held at the time of this match. G. Herbert Windeler's official connection with the USGA started in 1901 and was climaxed by the Presidency in 1903-1904. Herbert Jaques, elected to the Executive Committee in 1907, held the Presidency in 1909-10. Herbert C. Leeds served on the Executive Committee in 1905. When one considers what this Association means to modern United States golf, one cannot help but give a great deal of credit to the sound founda-

tion laid by these early internationalists of The Country Club. After all, this was an international match!

While on the subject of the players in these matches and their connection with the USGA, two other members of The Country Club side in later matches also have been honored by election to the highest office in American golf: Herbert Jaques, the son of the Herbert Jaques of the original match, and Harold W. Pierce. In addition to these five Presidents, numerous members of the USGA Executive Committee have played for Brookline.

In passing, it might be pointed out that it was not their official positions which qualified them to represent The Country Club. With the sole exception of Laurence Curtis, all assumed their USGA offices subsequent to their being privileged to play against Montreal.

Just as a goodly proportion of The Country Club players freely gave of their time and labor to further American golf, so, too, have many of the Royal Montreal players, through their connection with the Royal Canadian Golf Association, been instrumental in advancing the game in Canada.

The Players Who Started It in 1898



Participants in the first match between the Royal Montreal Golf Club and The Country Club at Montreal on May 21, 1898, were, omitting the standees in the background and reading from left to right: (rear row) H. C. Leeds, the Rev. J. Barclay, the Rev. J. R. Dobson, J. Taylor, F. I. Amory, W. J. S. Gordon, J. R. Meeker, H. C. Ernst; (middle row) Q. A. Shaw, Jr., L. A. Frothingham, G. T. Rice, G. W. Macdougall; (front row) F. J. Stancliffe, Laurence Curtis, W. W. Watson, G. H. Windeler, K. R. Macpherson, Herbert Jaques, S. H. Bennett.

Everyone knows a good drive from the first tee does not win a golf match. A good start was made in Montreal in 1898, but what about the rest of the round? Except for the war years, 1914 to 1918 and 1939 to 1945, the matches have been played each fall, alternating between Royal Montreal Golf Club in Dixie and The Country Club in Brookline. In September, 1948, the 50th Anniversary was celebrated at Montreal. In September of this year, the beginning of the second half-century was celebrated in Brookline.

Turn back for a moment to the list of The Country Club names of 1898. Mark that of Q. A. Shaw, Jr. Though his last appearance as a player was in 1946, Mr. Shaw was on hand in 1948 to commemorate the first 50 years and again in 1949 to start the two clubs off on the second 50 years. To those who know him, this gentleman is a living ref-

utation of the shibboleth that United States golf in its infancy was an old man's game.

How the matches started seems to be lost in history. That they were carried on is a fact. The reason for their success is probably unique.

When it comes to selecting the individuals who are to play, the men who have played the longest are given first consideration. There are many members of both sides who have been connected with these gatherings for more than 20 years.

To supplement the older in age, one or two younger men are added each year or so. These additions are not chosen merely for their golfing ability; prime consideration is given to those who individually will contribute to the gatherings and will insure the permanence of the matches. This year the handicaps of The Country Club players

The Players Who Continued It in 1948



Participants in the 50th match between the Royal Montreal Golf Club and The Country Club at Montreal in September, 1948: (standing) P. S. Macnutt, F. T. Pfaelzer, J. V. Kerrigan, D. C. Watson, A. Hutchison, M. Lewis, G. S. Currie, D. Jones, A. Rogers, R. T. Riley, G. C. Marler, J. D. Baile, C. L. Peirson, H. A. Cresswell, J. A. Newell, T. B. Heney, A. J. Hills, H. K. White, J. P. Anglin, J. T. Baldwin, C. B. Balch, F. A. Reece, R. J. Dawes, M. Jenckes, G. Horrax, J. W. Yuile, C. F. Rowley; (seated) J. C. Harris, I. L. Ibbotson, F. King, B. C. Gardner, T. M. Clafin, J. C. Kemp, E. W. Rogers, R. P. Jellett, C. C. Patterson, Jr., J. de M. Marler, Herbert Jaques, K. G. Blackader, H. M. Biscoe, Jr., W. W. Robinson, P. Gilbert, P. S. Gregory, G. Henderson, F. J. Kavanaugh.

ranged from 2 to 21; of the Royal Montreal players, 2 to 24.

Because of this continuity of play, the visitor arriving at the host club feels as though he is stepping into his own club. The warm reception is extended not only by his immediate opponents but by club members having no connection whatsoever with the games.

The number on a side depends to some extent upon the visitors. The visitors take 20 to 24 players. The home side not only has the same number, but being at home, quite a few extras. Two days of play provide matches for these extras. In accordance with the customary handling of play, the men with most years in the meetings have the inside track for both days of play. It is the new men, no matter how much better golfers they may be, who must step aside and play but once.

The early games at singles were decided by the total holes won in a full round of 18 holes. Later this was changed to singles the first day and four-balls the second. The current system is singles the first day and foursomes the second, the scoring being like that of the Walker Cup Matches. Needless to say, Royal and Ancient Golf Club Rules apply in Canada; USGA Rules in Brookline. The Rules, without any deviation, are strictly applied.

International Precedence

One final remark. In all modesty, the two clubs had always looked on these matches as the oldest international golf competition in the world, ranking second in age only to those between England and Scotland. When the Captain of The Country Club side made this observation at Royal Montreal in 1948, he was immediately challenged by some of the Canadians. Their argument was, regardless of any matches played prior to 1707, since that date Scotland and England have been parts of the United Kingdom, hence since that date such competition would not be international. Such being the case, it would indicate that the annual matches between Royal Montreal and The Country Club are the oldest *continuous* international golf matches in the world.

Far be it from any member of The Country Club to raise any question as to the status of England and Scotland. Remember, the observation came from a member of the British Commonwealth.

After all, whether the matches are the oldest, the second oldest or what, everyone of The Country Club side is proud to be connected with these meetings. The 51 years of unbroken gatherings, except for war years, is proof of the good will and pleasure such an inter-club competition affords.