

## The Ladies: Then and Now

Fifty years have passed since Miss Frances C. Griscom of Philadelphia won the Women's Amateur Championship at the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in 1900 and she doesn't play anymore. She stopped abruptly the year she was beaten by a girl who was not born in 1900.

Miss Griscom's enthusiasm has never waned, however. Only last June she sat by the 18th green at the Merion Golf Club one tense afternoon to watch the Open Championship.

In this year of the Golden Anniversary Championship at the East Lake Course of the Atlanta Athletic Club, the game is fortunate to have a keen witness who can recreate its early years.

### Mr. Cox's Cup

Miss Griscom made her debut in the second Championship at the Morris County Golf Club in New Jersey in 1896, which was the first for the cup presented by Robert Cox of Gorgie, Edinburgh, Scotland. The cup was a major attraction. The NEW YORK TIMES exhausted its superlatives in describing it:

"Probably the most elaborate and handsomest trophy that has ever been offered as a prize in any contest ever held in this country will be the beautiful, thousand-dollar silver cup recently given by Mr. Robert Cox of Scotland to the United States Golf Association for the Women's Championship of America.

"The deed of gift, which was accepted by the United States Golf Association with the trophy at its annual meeting February 8, 1896, is as follows:

"I, Robert Cox, of Gorgie, Edinburgh, Scotland, by these presents, and for the encouragement of the ancient and royal game of golf, do make over and convey to the United States Golf Association, in perpetuity, a trophy for the Women's Amateur Championship of the United States, to be played for under the rules of the association governing such championship and subject only to the condition that the first competition shall



Miss Frances C. Griscom in 1900

be held at the Morris County Golf Club, and the trophy is to remain in the custody of the club of which the winner is a member until won by the member of another club. Witness my hand and the seal of St. Andrews at Edinburgh on this 20th day of January, 1896.

Robert Cox

Witness, John M. Chapman.

"Mr. Cox, the worthy donor of this magnificent prize, is a member of the British Parliament, besides holding many smaller honorable positions in Edinburgh. He has been a frequent visitor to America, and it was while visiting friends in Morristown shortly after the golf links were laid out there in the spring of 1894 that Mr. Cox realized the possibilities of the game in this country and the enthusiasm for it which would undoubtedly be developed among the women and got the idea that he would, at the proper season, present a cup for the ladies' championship of America,

and witness the first contest for his cup."

Miss Griscom had started playing golf only two years before over three holes cut in thick clover on her father's country place, and although she was among the eight qualifiers, she was eliminated in the first round.

#### Unfeminine Concentration

"Miss Beatrix Hoyt was supreme," Miss Griscom recalls of the 16-year-old winner. "She could even break a hundred!" In 1897 and 1898, Miss Griscom was a semi-finalist, and in the first year of the Nineteenth Century, she won. A share of the credit undoubtedly was attributable to a distinctly unfeminine example of concentration.

"I had the second best score in the qualifying," she recalls, "so the shirt-waist I wore became a lucky one. It was washed each night and worn the next day. In the final, before a gallery of four thousand, it split from neck to waist and I never knew it."

Present-day scoring continues to amaze Miss Griscom, whose score in that qualifying round was a 96 to Miss Hoyt's 94. They were the only scores under 100 and were truly remarkable in their day.



Miss Beatrix Hoyt in 1897.

"In 1898 Miss Elsie Cassatt set the record at Merion with a 61-62-123," she comments. "Mrs. E. A. Manice won the driving competition that year with a drive of 134 yards, 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

"It was not until the Haskell ball appeared in 1901 that scores began to improve. Personally, I never was as good with the new ball, although I managed to break ninety occasionally before I stopped playing tournament golf.

"The greatest changes in fifty years, though, are in the courses. They now have beautiful turf, perfect greens and raked bunkers. In our time we played out of footprints and all sorts of rough places."

#### The First Championship

The improvement in women's golf over the half century, however, is also revealed by turning back to the records of the first USGA Women's Amateur Championship, which was at stroke play over the nine holes of the Meadow Brook Club on Long Island. The NEW YORK SUN proclaimed, the day after the competition:

"New York claims the first amateur woman golfer of America, through the prowess on the Meadow Brook links yesterday of Mrs. Charles S. Brown, a resident of the city, who has learned the game to good advantage during her summer sojourns at Shinnecock Hills. Her victory was gained by the narrow margin of two strokes from Miss N. C. Sargent of the Essex County Club, the champion on the links near Boston, while third place in the competition was won by Mrs. W. B. Thomas, her clubmate. Mrs. Brown's score for the eighteen holes was 132, making the women's record for the links.

"Mrs. Brown is a graceful driver, but her great advantage was in finely directed approach strokes and in putting. One putt, on the home green, made the hole from a distance of thirty feet, and other putts were nearly as good. Mrs. Thomas played an even game, some of her drives and brassie shots being very good. The longest drive of the match was made by Miss Harrison. Charles W. Barnes, her scorer, paced the distance from the tee to

the ball and found it to be 128 yards. Her brassie and approach strokes were usually excellent; one approach with the lofting iron dropped the ball dead on the green at the eighth hole. Mrs. Shippen was not in her best form, but her long and high drives were very effective. Poor luck befell Miss Ford at the start, but her second round was in good style. A fall into the brook cost her 16 strokes on the first round, at the second hole.

"The scores follow:

Mrs Charles S. Brown, Shinnecock Hills Golf Club-

Out .....11 4 9 4 5 7 9 14 6-69  
In ..... 7 3 9 4 5 6 12 13 6-63—132

Miss N. C. Sargent, Essex County Country Club-

Out .....10 5 12 5 6 5 8 10 9-70  
In ..... 9 4 10 4 5 6 9 8 9-64—134

Mrs. W. B. Thomas, Essex County Country Club-

Out .....10 5 10 7 6 10 9 10 8-75  
In ..... 8 5 8 5 6 5 9 12 8-66—141

Mrs. William Shippen, Morris County Golf Club-

Out ..... 9 4 6 4 7 7 9 11 11-74  
In .....12 4 8 5 9 7 8 11 7-71—145

Miss Harrison, Shinnecock Hills Golf Club-  
Out ..... 9 4 12 6 6 7 15 8 10-80  
In ..... 7 4 10 9 5 6 11 10 8-70—150

Miss Anna Sands, Newport Golf Club-  
Out .....10 4 8 5 6 9 10 13 12-77  
In ..... 8 10 11 6 6 6 9 15 7-78—155

Miss A. Howland Ford, Morris County Golf Club-

Out ..... 8 16 9 5 9 8 9 12 10-86  
In ..... 5 4 10 5 9 9 9 10 11-72—158

Mrs. Arthur Turnure, Shinnecock Hills Golf Club-

Out ..... 9 6 12 5 6 7 7 15 8-75  
In ..... 7 6 12 5 7 5 10 19 9-80—155

Miss Helen Shelton, Morris County Golf Club-  
Out ..... 8 4 10 5 8 7 11 16 11-80  
In .....11 5 15 4 8 9 9 12 8-81—161

Mrs. Fellowes Morgan, Morris County Golf Club-

Out ..... 7 15 12 7 8 12 9 12 8-90  
In ..... 9 8 6 4 5 10 9 14 9-74—164

Miss May Bird, Meadowbrook Hunt Club-

Out .....10 11 14 5 6 10 12 13 9-90  
In .....10 8 16 4 9 7 8 13 8-83—173

Miss Louise F. Field, Morris County Golf Club-

Out ..... 9 9 13 6 10 12 13 15 10-96  
Withdrawd."

## The Molasses-Footed Golfer

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of these snail-gearred pros operate as though they were being paid double for overtime. They take so much time lining up putts that greenkeepers sometimes move the cup before a stroke has been accomplished, and this endless study affects the professional's concentration almost as much as that of the degraded duffer.

And the deliberate professional is taking chances with his witnesses, for, as a group, a golf gallery is rather like a small child. It can remain quietly stationary only so long. Then the strain becomes too great. There is a shuffling of feet as stiff knees relax. There is a splutter of voices and the players flinch before it, when they are almost entirely responsible.

Ralph Guldahl was the most irritating of this species, for Ralph would often walk 180 yards to the green before firing his second shot. The green had been there when he had toured the course that morning, but Ralph wished to assure himself that there had been no hanky-panky in the meanwhile.

Many of the glossier amateurs have fallen into this rut, this rut which runs ankle-deep in chilled molasses. During a tournament last year, we saw Bill Campbell on the 18th green with Wil Wehrle, and Campbell examined the line of his four-foot putt so long that Wehrle lay down and snored gently.

Remember what Alex Smith said — "Miss 'em quick."

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