

## EARLY GOLF AT PINEHURST

### C. L. Becker Tells of the Winning of the First Cup

#### And the Aspect of the Course When Vardon Made His Famous Visit

It was just 21 years ago that the astonished turkey hunters in this old settlement first began to wonder what madness had seized the Yankee that was building the hotel near Linden on Page's old logging road. They could understand that it was to be a beautiful place called Pinehurst. And that any wise resident of Boston or the North pole would be glad to come dip into their sunshine and ride the sandy paths without needing a bear skin and an oil stove every minute of the day. But what earthly purpose out of bedlam could be served by ripping up the lean earth, they could not conceive.

#### TURNING A DEER RUN INTO A GOLF LINKS

The cause of this bewilderment were the operations James W. Tufts, who founded the village, and Dr. D. L. Culver were up to in the fall of 1897. Doctor Culver was, and is, a famous sportsman, perhaps best known at the traps where he is the peer of any man. In those days, before the advent of the golf architect and landscape surgeon, these gentlemen were probably as competent as any men alive to undertake the daring project of turning a lumber region and a deer run into a golfing mecca.

By the first of February a nine hole wonder had immersed from the sticks and the first ball was driven over a fair way since become famous in the annals of the game. The native skeptics were not the only ones that marvelled. In the local paper we find an announcement of the opening of the course by Dr. Culver at that time. And the general attitude of the public in regard to a game now numbering probably more players than any other in the world, can be judged by the fact that Culver considered it necessary to assure his readers that golf was a "regular" game, and one that he felt sure would outlast its "novelty."

#### PHARRE THE FIRST CHAMPION

However there were even then a strong nucleus of enthusiasts and these rapidly congregated to try out the new links. J. D. Tucker of Stockbridge was engaged as the first professional, and a handicap tournament, medal play, developed a 97, made by the veteran Geo. C. Dutton. The Cup was won that year by Dr. E. R. Pharre of Brooklyn, with a card of 89, the best net score of the year.

It is a tribute to the ability and foresight of the designers that this first outlay, this first breaking into the woods has stood the test of all the study and development made since in the construction of golf courses. The 60 acres laid out that year have seen the tread of a million feet. The exact same holes of course no longer can be found. But they form the nucleus, providing the basis of the present Number 1 course. And they

were identical with nine holes of what was Number 1 within a few years. The old champions and friends of the village will recognize them by number. Mr. James Tufts' first hole was a short pitch of 118 yards, the very same that for so many years was number 3 on the First Course. It may be of some interest to preserve the fading record of this primitive but enduring battle ground. In setting the location of this course out in the following table, we wish it borne in mind that in speaking of Number 1 course, we mean number 1 as it was known to a generation of players before remodelled by Donald Ross.

Hole on First 9	was hole on No. 1	Yards
1	3	118
2	4	314
3	5	214
4	6 and 7	475
5	16	500
6	17	160
7	18	340
8	1	150
9	2	290

Making a total of 2561 yards for the nine holes with a bogey of 39.

Tufts' faith in the future of the game and of the location selected for the course was demonstrated by his building the club house hard upon the completion of the links. The old country club was finished that same year—1898—and still forms a nucleus, although a small one, of the present club.

#### VARDON MAKES A RECORD

Within two years this woodsman's wonder, this Sandhill pasture had become so well recognized in the golfing world that Vardon made a point of coming to Pinehurst and playing over the course on his famous trip through the United States. Meantime of course another nine holes had been added, covering something more than 150 acres.

March 9th and 10th, 1900 were Vardon days at the Country Club, still remembered, and commemorated by them—the card of his best round, framed and signed, and hanging in the office. He played four rounds, scoring 78, 75, 71 and 75. The 71 was not only the best record ever made over the course up to that time, but it was a clear ten strokes better than had been recorded.

The course made famous at the time by this visit of Vardon was the Old Number One, and was 5176 yards long.

#### DONALD ROSS CHANGES THE LANDSCAPE

Soon thereafter the aspect of the entire surrounding country began to change by degrees. For it was in the following autumn that Donald Ross came to take charge of golf at the resort, and to develop the science of golf course construction and finesse to the point it has now reached. He superintended and devised the changes on this old number one, and built the other three courses that are now in commission. Chronologically these additional courses appeared on the scene,

The first nine of No. 2 in 1902.

The second nine of No. 2 in 1907.

The first nine of No. 3 in 1908.

The second nine of No. 3 in 1911.

First 6 of No. 4 in 1915.

The first nine of No. 4 were completed in 1916.

The last nine of number 4 are now under construction.

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