

The Trophies of Alberta Golf

By Taylor Tracey

Alberta Golf, formerly known as the Alberta Golf Association, has been around since 1912 running our provincial championships for over 100 years. Throughout our history we've seen many great champions whether it was Betty Stanhope Cole and her impressive record of 16 Alberta Women's Amateur wins. We've seen Bob Wylie, Keith Alexander, and Doug Silverberg's historic amateur careers culminating in the nickname "W.A.S +1" referring to our Willingdon Cup composition always including some form of the Big 3 (and the next best player) from the 1950's into their senior days. We've had impressive young players blast on to the scene like Doug Lecuyer winning the Alberta Junior three times in four years (the year he didn't win he claimed the Alberta Men's Amateur). We've had young players like Jessica Luciuk and Kareen Qually-Nelson who won everything Alberta had to offer and began representing Canada as part of our International Teams.

While many people know the names of the winners, many don't know the history of what they're winning. Alberta Golf has had a variety of different championships over its history with different trophies being handed out, different names as sponsors came and went. Whether it was the original Alberta Open trophy being called the Journal Trophy, named after the Edmonton Journal who donated the trophy to the association in the 1930's, or the Calgary Herald sponsoring the old Country Districts championship and providing the Herald trophy at the same time, which was later changed to the Tom Boy Country and Districts championship. The junior championships used to be sponsored by Pepsi-Cola, with the champion being aptly named the Pepsi-Cola Alberta Junior Champion. Over time lots has changed. The two that have remained the same from the start are the Men's Amateur and the Women's Amateur. This is their story.

The Alberta Men's Amateur, the highest prize in the province for a male amateur golfer, has been around since before even the Association began. It has undergone minor changes to its name and look but remains as the coveted prize for any aspiring Albertan. Before the AGA got its start there were two clubs, the Edmonton Country Club and the Calgary Golf & Country Club, who began hosting a competition to name the province's top golfer. While the rotation of host clubs is unclear according to Golf Canada and Alberta Golf's records, the winners are not and thus began the rise of our first great players. In 1908 the first ever Alberta Men's Amateur was played at the Calgary Golf & Country Club and was won by hometown favourite Charlie Hague, an Alberta Golf Pioneer, who helped lay the foundation for the great amateurs to follow. Not much is known about this early champion other than he was a Calgary banker who despite his provincial success liked to stay out of the limelight. This would be out of his control in 1921, when he was the runner up in the Canadian Men's Amateur. He quickly became a fan favourite as he came back in every match he played including the final, where he was five down through the first 12 holes and rallied to be only two down starting the afternoon and forced two extra holes after the 36 hole match had finished. Hague's showing put Western Canada on the golfing map at a time when golf was ruled by the east.

Hague continued his winning ways in Alberta throughout the early years of golf in Alberta. He won three of the first four unofficial Men's Amateurs. In 1911, the Calgary Golf & Country Club hosted a dinner to celebrate their new clubhouse and the pending Men's Amateur event. The

dinner drew wide spectacle and their intention behind the dinner was creating a governing body was created. Officially in 1912, the Alberta Golf Association was founded by the Lethbridge Country Club, the Edmonton Country Club, the Calgary Golf & Country Club, Fort Macleod Golf Club, and the Calgary St Andrews Golf Club. It was at this event the Association named its first executives all of which are considered pioneers of the sport in Alberta. Coinciding with this was our first official Men's Amateur which was won by Charlie Hague of Calgary. This is the first mention of a cup of some kind being given to the winner, and it was named the C.W. Cross Cup.

The Cross Cup was the cup awarded to the winner of the Men's Amateur and is still used as the topper for the current trophy. The cup was donated by Charles Wilson Cross. Cross was born in Ontario in 1872. He received a variety of education culminating in his BA and LLB degrees from Osgoode Hall. After articling at a Toronto law firm, he moved to Edmonton in 1897 and became a Liberal MLA in 1905 and was elected to the Edmonton electoral district from 1905-1917, and the Edson electoral district from 1913-1925. He served as the Attorney General for Alberta for some time and retired to pursue federal politics in 1925 before passing away in 1928. Cross's connection to golf was as a member at the Edmonton Country Club. Not much is known as to why he donated the Cup to the Association, but Cross donated the original Alberta Men's Amateur trophy and his legacy in golf will be forever felt because of this.

The Cross Cup remained as the crowning achievement of winning the Men's Amateur for years to come and is still prominent as it sits atop the current base. In 1976, the trophy base was changed and renamed to the Charlie F Scott Memorial Trophy after C.F (Charlie) Scott. Scott was a huge part of sports in Alberta. Moving to Calgary as a baby, Scott played hockey, baseball, and football in his youth. He turned to golf in his twenties, where he played part in the founding of the Inglewood Golf Club in Calgary and won two club championships there before moving to Edmonton after the Second World War. While in Edmonton, he became the president of the Edmonton Golf Association and helped create the first Edmonton Open in 1949. At the same time, he became the secretary of the Alberta Golf Association and held the position for twenty years. Through his time, he saw the rise of many of Alberta's great champions including the junior careers of Silverberg, Wylie, and Alexander, among others. In 1971, the Calgary Booster Club named Scott the Sportsman of the Year because of his work with golf, curling, and football. Scott resigned from his secretary role and in 1976, to honour a man who devoted his life to sport, the Alberta Golf Association proudly named its most coveted prize after him. He was also named an honorary lifetime director of the association he proudly once served.

Today, the Men's Amateur proudly boasts the C.W. Cross Cup on top of the Charlie F. Scott Memorial Trophy which will be once again handed out to the top male amateur in the province at the Derrick Golf & Country Club, with the winner's name adding an additional chapter of history to one of Canada's oldest trophies.

The Women's Amateur trophy, just like the Men's is seen as the epitome of amateur golf success in the province and has been around for just as long. The Women's Championship has been competed for as long as the Men's with the first winner coming in 1907 won by Mrs. W.N. Clark. This too was an unofficial championship until 1912 when the Alberta Ladies Golf Union was born. Refusing to join the growing Canadian Ladies Golf Union as a provincial branch, the

Alberta Ladies continued running their own Women's Amateur championship for nearly a quarter century. While not much is known about this time, many of the winners of the ALGU's championship are early pioneers of the women's game in Alberta like Janet Sparrow, Mrs. J.R. Henley, and Mrs. W.E Milner. At the time ladies were competing for the McKay Cup, a coveted prize, which was donated by the Watson Bros. Jewelry store. The Watson Bros. were a popular choice in the early 1900's, even being commissioned to help create the temporary parliamentary mace in 1906. The Watson Bros. commissioned a carpenter to create this mace out of wood, and while it was always going to be temporary the mace was used until 1956 when a new mace was created and has been used ever since. While there are no pictures of the McKay Cup, this was a surely a treasured artifact at the time.

While the ALGU continued running it's own championship for the province, the Canadian Ladies Golf Union was hard at work trying to create a chain of provincial branches of it's own. Originally started by Florence Harvey, a Canadian Golf Hall of Fame member from BC, in 1913 the Canadian Ladies Golf Union was created to provide the women in Canada access to the British Ladies Golf Union and their handicapping system. Until this point, the RCGA was running a Canadian Ladies Amateur championship by themselves. In 1921, the CLGU met at the Canadian Ladies Amateur and decided to adopt their own constitution and began the process of recruiting provincial branches, and creation of a new championship.

In 1928, the ALGU finally decided to join the CLGU as its Alberta branch. At this time, they needed a new trophy to represent their joining of the CLGU. In comes the trophy we have today, and often seen as the best trophy in the Alberta Golf trophy case, the Sheffield Cup. The Sheffield Cup was also donated by a local jewellery store known as Jackson Bros. Jewellery in Edmonton. This pioneer jewellery store was started in 1906 and closed in 1933. Being around for 27 years, the Jackson Bros. created a wide range of jewellery including war pins. The unifying piece in all their jewellery was their signature logo which is proudly displayed on the Sheffield Cup. There's no clear connection between the three brothers who ran the store and the CLGU or golf in general, but with their signature logo front and centre, it's hard to miss. While there's still a lot of unknown about this trophy it's still a coveted prize and was first won by Mrs. Milner and would be held by other golfing legends like Paddy Arnold, Irene Horne, Betty Stanhope Cole, and Rae Milligan Simpson throughout our history.

Today, the Women's Amateur proudly and beautifully displays its own history with the Jackson Bros. logo front and centre for all to see. The next chapter in its history patiently awaits its next winner which will be crowned over July 2nd to 4th with a host club yet to be announced.

Trophies often act as a record book of those that have come before and paved the way for the next generation. The stories behind these trophies and the names are often lost and forgotten waiting to be reclaimed. Alberta Golf is committed to continue its work in researching this history and connecting our past with the current crop of players following in the pioneers' footsteps. We were there for Hague, we were there for Cole, and we'll be there for the next one.