



AT THE MID-OCEAN CLUB, BERMUDA  
L. to R.: J. B. Mabon, Captain Allen Lindley; E. H. Simmons, President of the New York Stock Exchange, and S. C. Mabon of New York



THE INTERNATIONAL MATCHES AT MADRID  
Were attended by King Alphonse of Spain (who is third from right). General Primo de Rivera is also shown watching the play

## When the Rubber-Core Ball Was New

By J. H. TAYLOR

**I** THINK I hold a distinction of which I am more than a little proud. I claim to be the first British professional that ever struck a rubber-cored ball, and the story, to substantiate the claim, may be worth the telling.

On my arrival at Wheaton, on the occasion of my first visit to America in 1900, I found a letter awaiting me from the B. F. Goodrich Co., Akron Rubber Works, Akron, Ohio, dated October 2, 1900, informing me that they had sent me half a dozen Haskell balls and inviting my opinion of them after a trial, with the information that "The Haskell ball has created the greatest enthusiasm and it looks now as if it would be a success in every way. This was my first contact with the new ball.

I have always been very conservative in my views regarding innovations connected with the game, and having, as it were, strengthened my gums on a "guttie" I did not dare to jeopardise my chances of winning the first American Open I had entered by playing with it as the makers hoped. Had I been less sceptical and more plucky as Herd was at Hoylake two years later, and in the light of a later experience had done so, I was bound to have won an American championship by a pocket full of strokes. The "guttie" would have been hopelessly outclassed as an annihilator of distance. I did test it with a few strokes, but its liveliness frightened me and I dared not take the plunge. What a chance I missed of making an immortal name for my-

self, that of a man who dared to do and who won the first championship of any country with a ball of original conception, thereby setting a standard that the world followed and creating a precedent that, as events proved, has revolutionized the game.

I confided to Mr. Van Tassel Sutphen, then editor of *Golf*, the first American magazine devoted to the game (afterward acquired by *Golf Illustrated*) that the "Haskell" was a ball, that if accepted, would upset all existing theories and notions and we determined on a thorough test when we got back to New York. We lost no time in putting the "Haskell" to the test and for this purpose journeyed down to the Rockaway Hunt Club in Long Island accompanied by Colonel Harvey

and one of the Harper Brothers. I played alone for fear of prying eyes. I remember remarking on the lightness of "feel," as if I were hitting a soap bubble, and contrasted the absence of control as compared with the gutty to the Haskell's detriment. It was at the third hole that the full realization of its powers burst upon me. It was a hole of about two hundred and thirty yards in length. A group of players were on the green holing out far beyond my reach, as I estimated. I let go, caught the ball right under its tail and it flew an incredible distance right among them. I hurried forward to express my apologies and my assurance that I had never hit a ball as far in my life, certainly not under normal conditions. (Continued on page 78)



WHERE WERE THE OFFICERS WHEN THE STOCK WENT UP?

Why down at Seaview near Atlantic City quietly playing golf! While General Motors was creating new peaks, the photographer snapped Donaldson Brown, vice-president in charge of finances; John Pratt, vice-president in charge of accessories; J. D. Mooney, vice-president and president of the export division and John Thomas Smith, general counsel

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We returned to New York fully convinced that a new and far reaching factor had entered into the game and it was not long afterwards that the golfing world was made to realize that this was so. Truth and candor compels me to say that I fought against its introduction into British golf, solely on the grounds that it was something which in its sure evolution would tend to impair the game as we conceived it; but, the march of inevitable events was too strong as all the world knows. And I am now ready to admit that the world showed wisdom by its acceptance.

There are but few people in my country who realize how near I was to severing my connection with British golf and settling down in America at this time. Colonel Harvey conceived the idea of forming a company for the manufacture of selling of golf requisites in which the business and name of Cann & Taylor were to be incorporated, worked entirely from the American side. It was a most generous, scrupulously fair, and most alluring offer and caused me a deal of mental perturbation whether I should accept it or not. I am disclosing no secret when I say that Cann [Mr. Taylor's business partner abroad] was all for acceptance, and his gentle insistence that I should do likewise, only added to it. This offer was the outcome of my contract with *Golf*, and the fact that it was made leads me to believe that I had proved my worth to the paper. I sincerely hope so. I have the contract now as drawn up by the legal firm of Stedman and Larkin, 7 Nassau Street, New York, and signed by John Larkin, but a part of a clause in it reads thus, I quote verbatim. The party shall have the further privilege of terminating this contract provided he determines not to sever his connection with the club or organization at Richmond with which he is now connected."

I decided after a deal of cogitation and correspondence with my wife to accept the provision that the clause offered and I did so with the greatest reluctance. For these reasons which I hope will appear commendable: I had been married but five years and had begun to found a family which later on amounted to nine children being born to us, and the wrench from all the old ties appeared too great for us to suffer. I believe that Colonel Harvey was disappointed at my decision, but I should like to again take this opportunity of tendering him my grateful thanks for this, and many other kindnesses received from him. I venture to think that our relations for the two months we were associated were, if not ideal, of the most pleasant nature.

I often tell my friends that had I accepted the Colonel's offer, I should now have owned half America, but, as Kipling says, "that is another story." I left America with regret. I had made so many kind friends, had been received with such consideration and given such generous hospitality that I looked forward to visiting the Continent again with much pleasure. This wish was gratified in 1923 which visit only served to intensify what I had previously felt from the bottom of my heart. And I live in the hope that, some day, I may come again.