

entries, ... no last day entries!

He's optimistic about the future of Vermont golf. "I see an expansion of golf availability here, and I hope to see us promote it as a destination tourist attraction just like skiing. One of the great things about golf in Vermont is that it's affordable. The VGA is definitely part of that."

by Bill Noble

... regulation for pesticide usage  
... courses, acting as the VGA representative to that council since its inception.

This year GS/ETS is expanding its vision and supervising the construction and grow-in of several courses. O'Connor is the assessor at four newly established golf course communities in Santiago, Chile, and will follow the process through to completion of the courses.

by Bob Labbance

## George Low, Sr.



George Low

Photo from the collection of Bob Labbance

George Low exerted a major influence on Vermont golf in its seminal days. Low was born in Carnoustie, Scotland in 1874, where he pursued a training and apprenticeship in golf. He learned all the skills expected of a Scottish professional of his day, including the making and repairing of golf clubs, the keeping of the greens, and the playing of the game.

Low made the steamer journey to the United States in 1899 and took a post at Dyker Meadows Golf Club at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, New York. He made a quick start in professional tournament golf by placing second in the U.S. Open just weeks after his arrival in the country.

Ekwanok founder James L. Taylor was a Dyker member, and charged with the search for a professional to fill the new post at Ekwanok. When he offered the job to Low, he accepted and moved to Vermont for Ekwanok's first season in 1900. Low held the job at Ekwanok for three summers, returning to Dyker Meadow each winter season. In 1903, he took a full-time job at Baltusrol and gave up both of his other positions.

Low was popular with the members at Ekwanok and wasted little time in establishing himself as one of the top professionals in the country. He continued to play in the U.S. Open, finishing sixth at Chicago in 1900, tied for ninth at Myopia in 1901 and tied for 12th at Garden City in 1902. He also made and repaired golf clubs, a business that would flourish with a shop in New York City after his move to Baltusrol.

Low was called by other Vermont clubs to lay out their golf links, a job he performed admirably, considering that some of the holes he plotted 90 years ago are still in use today. The Waubenakee Golf Club in Burlington called Low to extend their course in 1900, where he added several hundred yards and considerable challenge to the course. On July 7, 1901, he traveled to Rutland to explore a new golfing ground for the Rutland Golf Club. The *Rutland Herald* reported, "as soon as the farm crops are harvested Mr. Low will take a plan of the ground and will work out the course to be covered by the new links." His plan utilized the level land adjacent to East Creek, and several of his holes were incorporated into the 18-hole layout when Wayne Stiles installed the course that is still in play today.

After his Ekwanok tenure, Low returned to plan a course for Mt. Anthony Country Club. On October 11, 1905 the *Bennington Banner* announced, "George Low, the well known professional golfer has just completed the laying out of a nine-hole golf course for the Mt. Anthony Country Club. He laid out the Burlington course, the one at Rutland and others." Low's name had also been associated with the original design of the Montpelier Country Club.

In his later years, Low also invented a furrowed rake that became synonymous with the sand bunkers at Oakmont. The rake prevented bunker escape with the putter, forcing players to show their talents with an explosion shot from the sand. In describing the effect on bunkers Low wrote, "By raking the traps at right angles to the line of play I found that the bunkers maintained a uniform surface much better and for longer periods of time than under the old system of raking them smooth. It was also rarely possible altogether to overcome the penalty."

This well-rounded and respected golfer set a standard for all the Vermont professionals and course designers who would follow him.

by Bob Labbance