

# Anyway, Here's to Gardner

*American's Showing in British Championship, One of the finest Exhibitions in Nearly Two Decades*

By Grantland Rice

SIXTEEN years had passed since Walter J. Travis proved that it could be done. For it was just sixteen years ago that Walter J. Travis fought his way through the list of British amateurs in the golf championship of 1904 removing Ted Blackwell in the final round.

From that day on our shock troops had suffered heavy losses. Jerry Travers was twice stopped with a sudden jolt. Chick Evans in two attempts made but little headway. Francis Ouimet was cudged out quickly by an almost unknown. Heinie Schmidt came closest when he stalked his way to the sixth round, but after all these years it remained for Robert A. Gardner of Chicago to throw the heaviest scare into the ranks of British golf.

## *Gardner's Achievement*

GARDNER was beaten by the margin of a putt—beaten at the thirty-seventh hole—but his achievement was an amazing thing. It had been five years since he won his second championship of the United States, and last August, at Oakmont he was stopped by Bobby Jones in the second round.

In contending for the British title he had but little spring practice over here and only a few days in which to become acclimated at Muirfield. And he was the sole American representative with a chance. The burden from the start was upon his shoulders.

Every man who has ever known Bob Gardner knew that he was sure to make a rugged battle of every match. They knew that he had the golf to give any opponent a battle and the nerve to stick through to the finish. But few believed, under the heavy handicap, that he could have any great chance to succeed where Travers, Evans and Ouimet had failed. And when round after round passed and Gardner still held on, the admiration for his play increased.

## *Meeting Lockhart*

WHEN he was scheduled to meet Gordon Lockhart I asked a veteran Scotch golfer what he thought of the outcome.

"Well," he said, "if Gardner can beat Lockhart he will stop one of the greatest golfers in the British Empire, a golfer fully upon a par with Bobby Maxwell, H. H. Hilton or Laurie Jenkins. He will have to play grand golf to win."

That was the kind of golf that Gardner played. And so he passed into the final round where Yale, 1910, came face to face with Oxford, 1920. It was Yale against Oxford in one of the finest golf battles of two decades.

For the first time in sixteen years an American golfer was in the final round of a British Amateur championship—facing not one of the old school—not a Hilton, a Ball or a Maxwell—but a young star who had suddenly begun to astonish the nation after leaving a German prison camp. For thirteen months Cyril J. Tolley was surrounded by the barbed wire and walls patrolled by a German guard. The wonder is that after passing through this experience, including service with the Tank

Corps, that Tolley should have come upon his game so quickly. For he was unknown as a golfer when the war started, a mere kid in August, 1914.

Yet he, too, met the test. It is no light recovery to be 3 up and 4 to play, lose this lead and then come back with enough to win



ROBERT A. GARDNER

the first extra hole. It might work in this way for a veteran, but few youngsters could ever rally that quickly.

## *Gardner's Rally*

GARDNER'S rally at the finish was typical of his game. It was typical of his finish in 1915 at Detroit when he was 3 down and 5 to play against Max Marston—yet won out on the thirty-seventh hole.

Gardner's hasn't played as much golf as many of the other leaders and yet he has always had the foundation for championship play. This foundation includes a fine swing, ability to get fine distance, cool nerve and bulldog courage, with a world of physical stamina.

When others are beginning to tire under the strain Gardner begins to hit his stride. He is much more dangerous after the first two rounds than before, for generally there is a noticeable weakening on the part of many contestants who have just concluded two or

three thirty-six hole tests. In using an iron Gardner hardly takes more than a half swing. He can get tremendous distances with this abbreviated swing through the abnormal power he carries in his wrists, forearms and shoulders. Much of this power came from his pole vaulting days where he was the first or one of the first to clear thirteen feet.

The Chicago star was never rated as fine a putter as Travis, Travers or Ouimet, but he has generally been steady on the greens and capable at times of extraordinary things.

There has never been a more popular athlete in America than Bob Gardner. Physically he is as good to look upon as any one could hope to find—a tall, rangy well-built athlete, with a finely featured face and a friendly way. No man in American sport has more friends, and it is easy to understand why he made such a hit with the British public. His magnetism and his rare sportsmanship would account for that, beyond his skill at the game itself.

Tolley's victory means that England, after all, has a new school coming on to take the places of her fading veterans—her Balls and Hiltons and Maxwells who are still fine golfers, but who in the main have served out their best days.

With such golfers as Tolley, Wethered and Jenkins still around, the United States will need its strongest team in 1921 to storm the height where Gardner barely failed. And it is almost a certainty that the 1921 invasion will include at least six of the best that America has to offer.

## *Tolley a Champion*

WHEN the last British Championship was played in 1914, before the German snake began to weave its way through Belgium Cyril J. Tolley was just 15 years old.

So this last tournament was his first championship. Consider his situation—

After being two down in the forenoon round he had reached the thirty-third tee with victory in easy sight. He was 3 up and 4 to play. One more win or two more halved holes would settle the issue. Then, under the strain, with Gardner rallying in magnificent fashion, Tolley suddenly finds his three-hole lead wiped away with the match all square. Of all things in golf a turn of this sort is the most discouraging, even to the veteran.

Tolley waits and watches Gardner pitch to the first extra hole within twenty-five feet of the cup. He knows his opponent has a sure par 3, or at least a most probable one.

And under this heavy strain he then drops his ball within ten feet of the pin, the result of recovered balance and retrieved poise. It was the recovery of a champion at heart. It was full proof that Tolley was more than a mere shot-maker.

It was proof that in addition to golfing skill he had the nerve control needed to handle this skill in a championship way.

A glance at the path traveled by Gardner on his match to the final discloses the fact that the old Yale star encountered obstacles aplenty to have toppled a less formidable player. But he met each with a stern courage appearing to gird himself about a bit

more securely for each clash, and getting better the further the fray was prolonged.

His first match threatened to throw a veritable bomb into the ranks of the few fellow-countrymen who were pinning their faith on him to bear the brunt of the American attack. In his first match, which came in the second round of play, he encountered M. M. Burrell of Troon, a clubmate of Laurie Jenkins, who held the title over from the last previous championship in 1914. Gardner had some difficulty in getting under way and trailed his man until well past the turn. He forged ahead, however, at the fifteenth, but did not land a final decision until he reached the home green, winning 1 up.

*Defeats Blackwell*

**I**N the third round he encountered Edward Blackwell of Prestwick, a Scotch Internationalist, and reputed to be one of the long drivers in Britain. However, he was unable to measure strides with Gardner, even at his specialty of walloping the ball from the tees, Gardner usually leading him from twenty to thirty yards, and eventually winning 3 and 2. Gardner was out in 38 and had 31 for the seven holes played on the second nine.

Launching forth in the fourth round, Gardner encountered Jack MacIntyre of Cardross, and though the going was gradually tightening up, Bob came home winner by 4 and 2. He went out in 39, and settled down to an even better clip on the return journey, holding his total to 29 for the seven holes played. This round, incidentally, was marked by the defeat of Nelson Whitney, Gardner's only surviving running mate up to that point, Gordon Lockhart of Prestwick, one of Britain's best, defeating the New Orleans entry 2 and 1.

By the time he was straightened out in the fifth round, where he met W. Jobson of Stoke Poges, a former Oxford University star, he was hitting up a dizzy clip. The Englishman succeeded in winning but one hole during the match, which he lost 6 down with 5 to play. This pronounced margin of defeat for the ex-Oxford players is easily explained with the statement that Gardner had 36 for the first nine holes.

Thus far Gardner had been encountering players of real merit, but hardly either of the lot had been conceded better than a very slim chance to win the title. Not so, however, with his next match, in which he was called to do battle with Gordon Lockhart of Prestwick St. Nicholas. In Lockhart he met one of the ranking players of Britain. Golfers over here, who know British golf and golfers, such as J. S. Worthington, former Irish champion, and William Reekie, one of Scotland's topnotchers up to within a few years back, concede Lockhart a place with the best amateurs in the British Isles. Matched against anything in the field, Lockhart would have been an even choice to win.

*Prophecies Fulfilled*

**A**ND the contest between the two fully substantiates the contention. It was a battle royal from start to finish. After losing the first hole, Gardner halved the next two, before he took the fourth to get even. Gardner also took the fifth. They played the next five in halves before Lockhart won the eleventh to get even again. Gardner won the thirteenth, but lost the fifteenth. He came back with a win at the sixteenth, and the seventeenth was halved. Then he ran down

a twenty-foot putt for a 3 on the home hole, whereupon Lockhart, with nothing better than a half in sight, extended his congratulations.

In the semi-final Hon. Michael Scott of Royal St. Georges was the opposition, another fine golfer, and favored by some to win the title. It was another terrific battle. Gardner took the first three holes, but skidded rather noticeably on the next three and lost them all. He then won the seventh but turned even when he lost the ninth, after halving the eighth.

A fine 2 won for him at the tenth, but his opponent evened the match again at the thirteenth, only to lose the next two, eventually being beaten 2 down.

*The Final Struggle*

**T**HEN ensued the final match with Cyril J. H. Tolley, the brilliant young Oxford star, and their meeting was a classic, with the

**THE FINISH**

It was a dramatic finish . . . suggestive in many ways of the Hilton-Herreshoff finish at Apawamis in 1911, which also was carried to the 37th hole. Then, Herreshoff, all the way, was the under dog, but squared, Hilton winning on the extra hole.

Again history repeated itself. Gardner was 3 down and 4 to play. With dogged persistency he courageously kept on, squared the match, and found himself after 36 holes on the first tee again, the first to strike off at a hole, which, in the circumstances, is an exceedingly trying one—a single shotter, some 210 yards as I remember it, closely impinging on and paralleling an out of bounds stone wall on the left. He brought the shot off—a sure 3.

Imagine Tolley's state of mind, knowing as he did, his opponent was safely on the green! He must be made of the right stuff, for to his everlasting credit he put his ball inside Gardner's, and, the latter failing on his longer try, holed, for a 2 . . . and the championship.

Yet it seems a pity that after such a gallant struggle, of 36 holes, the issue should have been decided so summarily, so abruptly, by a single shot. A hole so important as the 19th should never be a single-shotter.

WALTER J. TRAVIS.

English youngster getting a hairline decision on the thirty-seventh green through sinking a long putt for a bird 2.

Gardner was very accurate with his long approach putts to-day, but failed sadly with some of the short ones. He led at the end of the first round, but the turning point came at the fifth and sixth holes of the second half, both of which he threw away on the green. He thereby lost the lead, and for a few holes seemed to lose his nerve. But when the American became three down with four to go he played with renewed determination.

Having a temporary relapse in his putting, Tolley was brought back to dormie one and lost the home hole, where he was first in the rushes, and then in a bunker. Gardner pat his tee shot to the 37th on the green, nine yards to the left of the pin. Tolley, however, played a beauty only four yards short of the hole and got the putt after Gardner had laid his second a yard from the pin. Gardner thus had a par three, but Tolley won the hole in a Birdie 2 and took the match.

The loser received almost as great an ovation as the winner.

*Tolley Took Lead*

**T**OLLEY won the first hole in the morning round, but Gardner took the next three. Tolley won the fifth and the next was halved. This made Gardner 2 up. By holding long putts on the eighth and ninth the Oxford man evened the match at the turn. Gardner won the tenth and they halved the next. The American found a bunker going to the twelfth, which he lost, and Tolley took the lead when he won on the next green. Gardner ran down a seven-yard putt on the fourteenth and they were all square. The fifteenth was halved, but Tolley missed a putt on the sixteenth which went to Gardner, who also won the seventeenth. As the eighteenth was halved the American visitor was 2 up at the finish of the first half of the match.

In the afternoon round Gardner lost his lead early in the play, and the match was all square on the twenty-third hole. At this stage Tolley was outplaying the visitor and at the turn (twenty-seventh hole) Gardner was 2 down.

The first hole in the second round was halved. Gardner pulled into the rough at the second and lost, leaving Tolley 1 down. The third hole was halved, Tolley patting finally after overrunning the green. Tolley took a hard half at the fourth and Gardner missed a four-foot putt at the fifth, where the match was squared. Gardner thus far had not played as steadily as in the forenoon.

Tolley, after being in the rough, had a nice run up and Gardner missed a putt, giving Tolley the lead, which he kept by cleverly pitching over a stymie at the seventh and securing a half. Gardner was bunkered near the green at the eighth, but made a fine recovery, snatching a half.

Gardner was near the wall going to the ninth and Tolley, playing perfectly, turned homeward 2 up. The next two holes were halved. Both competitors were in trouble at the twelfth, which also was halved, leaving Tolley 2 up and 6 to play.

They halved the thirteenth in 6, neither playing it very well. Then on the fourteenth, Tolley increased his lead to 3 up, by winning 3 to 4. Gardner rallied brilliantly and won the fifteenth and sixteenth. The seventeenth was a half in 4, leaving Gardner one down with but one to be played. He met the issue boldly, taking the home hole 4 to 5 to end the round even. Tolley's long putt at the first extra hole furnished the decision.

These figures tell a brief story of the battle:

	FIRST ROUND
Tolley—	
Out. . . . .	3 5 6 5 5 4 4 4 4—40
In. . . . .	5 5 4 4 4 4 6 5 4—41
Gardner—	
Out. . . . .	4 4 5 4 6 4 3 5 5—40
In. . . . .	4 5 6 5 3 4 5 4 4—40

	SECOND ROUND
Tolley—	
Out. . . . .	4 5 4 5 5 4 3 5 4—39
In. . . . .	4 4 5 6 3 6 6 4 5—43
Gardner—	
Out. . . . .	4 6 4 5 6 5 3 5 5—43
In. . . . .	4 4 5 6 4 5 5 4 4—41
Extra hole: Tolley, 2; Gardner, 3	