

THE GOLF ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA HALL OF FAME

By Martin D. Emeno, Jr.

In the early years of the Association, it was **Harold McFarland** of Huntingdon Valley Country Club who emerged over club mate William Smith as the area's top player.

McFarland, president of the sheet metal supplies company, Carter, Donlevy, won four Amateur Championships and three Patterson Cups between the years 1903 and 1913. In addition, he also earned four Silver Cross awards, given to the player with the lowest aggregate score in the two rounds of the Amateur Championship Qualifier, and the two rounds of the Patterson Cup. The Silver Cross was, and remains, emblematic of the Association's top stroke-play competitor.

Though the aforementioned accomplishments stand on their own merit, they, in a sense, mask an even more remarkable McFarland feat for his time. He was the first to break the score of 80 regularly in competition.

In his 1903 Patterson Cup win at St. Davids Golf Club — the same year as the inaugural World Series—for example, McFarland carded an impressive total of 155 (80-75). Compare that to George Fowle's victory total in the 1900 Patterson Cup at Philadelphia Cricket Club. His aggregate score was 174 (86-88). That year, half of the field—55 starters, 48 finishers—did not break 200. The highest score was an astonishing 235.

In the years of McFarland's other two Cup victories, 1905 and 1909, he posted 157 totals.

An excerpt from James Finegan's A Centennial Tribute to Golf in Philadelphia reflects the perception, as it relates to scoring, of the time. "McFarland had developed a sound swing and he could hit all the shots required to post the kind of scores—on more than one occasion, course and tournament records—that were actually within hailing distance of par itself. 'Level 4s' was the new target—still elusive, not nonetheless discernible out there in the horizon."

McFarland defeated fellow Golf Association of Philadelphia standout Smith, 6&4, for the 1904 Amateur. In the 1907 Amateur, McFarland stopped Walter Pfeil of The Springhaven Club, 2&1, for his second title. McFarland defeated George Crump, yes, Pine Valley Golf Club's own, 7&5, at St. Davids for the 1912 Amateur before winning his fourth and final crown the following year, 1-up, over Smith yet again. Smith himself was a three-time Amateur Champion and three-time Patterson Cup winner between the years 1898 and 1908. In fact, in the 1902 Amateur final Smith defeated McFarland.

Still today, McFarland's total of four Amateur victories has been eclipsed by only one individual—J. Wood Platt and his seven Amateur titles.

In 1909, McFarland upended A.W. Tillinghast, 8&6, for the Pennsylvania Golf Association Amateur title at Huntingdon Valley Country Club.



For many years Huntingdon Valley's Lynnewood Hall Cup was the most prestigious local tournament around and attracted brilliant fields littered with nationally and internationally renowned competitors. Jerome Travers, a four-time U.S. Amateur Champion and the 1915 U.S. Open Champion, Walter Travis and Max Marston, to name a few, competed yearly.

No matter for McFarland. He dominated and won the match-play tournament in 1903, 1904 and 1905 and again in 1912. At the time, it was customary for an individual who won the same tournament three times to take "permanent possession" of the trophy. He did.

McFarland graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1905 and captained its golf team.

In May of 1910, he married Ruth Miller of Brookline, Mass. The couple had three sons Harold, Jr., Robert and Malcolm.

In addition to serving as his company's president, McFarland served as head of the Philadelphia Copper and Brass Association and Chairman of the board of the Metal Club.

In July of 1940 he died at the age of 58. No cause of death was given.

