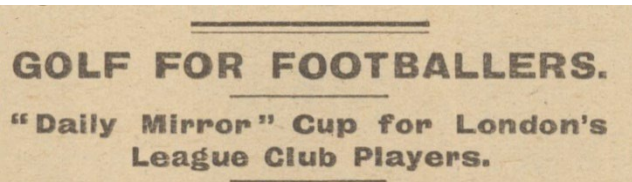


From the Archives – 5th September 2024

Roehampton Club Golf Professional George Gadd: Organiser for the London Footballers Golf Tournament in 1923

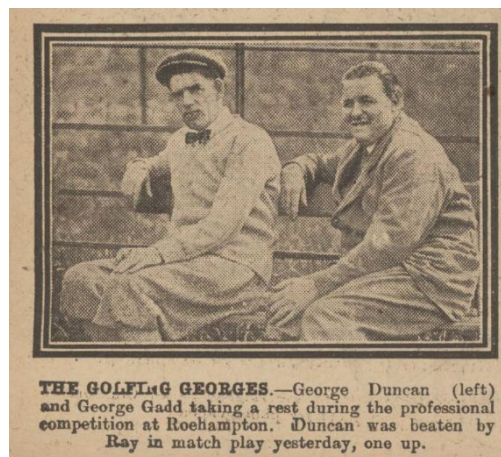


In February 1923, the *Daily Mirror* announced their sponsorship for the second running of the London Professional Footballers Golf Tournament.

The overwhelming success of the 1921 event involving nearly 50 players from ten London Football Clubs had captured the imagination of the public. The event was the first of its kind with an unexpected take up of players.

In preparation for the 1923 tournament, an organising committee was formed to make the necessary arrangements with George Gadd and fellow professional golfer George Duncan seconded to the committee to adjudicate the handicaps assigned to the various players in a preliminary round stroke play competition.

The players with the best 32 scores would then be entered in a subsequent knockout competition to decide the winner as in the previous staging of the event.



George Duncan was equally competent in both sports in Scotland when he was first offered terms to join Aberdeen football club before embarking on his illustrious golf career highlighted in 1920 winning the Open Championship.

He was well known to George Gadd emphasised in the same year when he won the Roehampton Club Invitation Golf Tournament.

He was also approached by Liverpool Football Club by the Manager, Tom Watson when Duncan was at Colwyn Bay. According to the *Sporting Times*, he declined the offer to play for the Club on the basis that he would not be as prone to injury playing golf as he would be in football.

Strangely, the 1923 event achieved little coverage in the newspapers apart from the draw for the team competition and one of the team matches played between



Tottenham Hotspur FC and Charlton Athletic FC at Highgate Golf Club. The match was easily won by the Tottenham team winning all their matches.

The last of these events took place the following year in 1924 and was well reported in many of the newspapers, especially the *Daily Mirror*.

GOLFING FOOTBALLERS.
Interesting Sequel to Professional Tournament at Highgate To-day.

SOCCER GOLF RIVALS.
Challenge Match Probable Between Blyth and Alton.



FOOTBALLERS' GOLF.—C. Alton (right) shaking hands with W. N. Blyth, whom he led yesterday in the first half of a challenge match, the sequel to the London professional footballers' golf tournament.

The individual championship held at Hadley Wood Golf Club was won by Brentford full back Charles Alton with Arsenal centre forward Billy Blyth in second place.

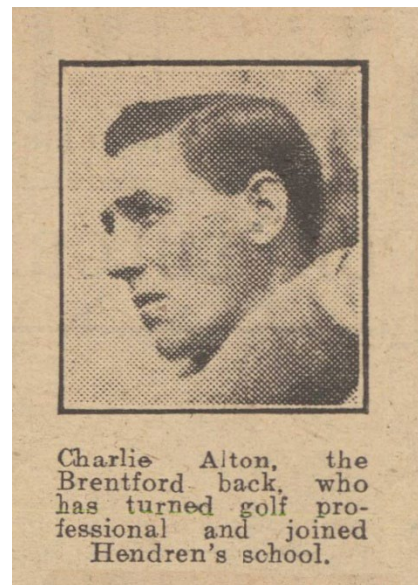
Their handicaps had been set at 3 and 6 respectively.

The Cup was donated by the *Daily Mirror* for the player returning the lowest net score. An interesting sequel to the event was a challenge match issued between the two players in a subsequent 36-hole challenge match played over two courses. The match was also sponsored by the *Daily Mirror* heralded as 'The All-England footballers Championship'.

The first of these matches took place at Highgate Golf Club with Alton finishing 1 up after 18 holes. The deciding match was held at Richmond Park Golf Club chosen by Alton where he was coached by Josh Taylor,

brother of five-time Open Champion JH Taylor. Alton played much the better golf winning the overall match 5 and 4 taking the gold medal presented by the *Daily Mirror*.

Alton went on to become a golf professional following, although his earnings would not be enough to make a living solely from the sport. He continued his associations with Josh Taylor at Richmond Park Golf Club and played with him in a match at Fulwell Golf Club in December 1924 representing the Priory Club which also included JH Taylor and his son.



Charlie Alton, the Brentford back, who has turned golf professional and joined Hendren's school.

FOOTBALLERS AT GOLF.
INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS IN COMPETITION.

Alton finished his career as a groundsman at the CAV Sports Club but can still claim to be the best golfer who played professional football in London.

Steve Riedlinger, Club Archivist