

Golf Society Formed in St. Andrews, Scotland

In St. Andrews, Scotland, the "22 Noblemen and Gentlemen of the Kingdom of Fife" formed the Society of St Andrews Golfers. (1754).

The founders motives were twofold. They were creating a private golf society to enjoy the sport and the conviviality that always followed. But they also planned to stage an annual contest for a significant trophy which they hoped would restore the reputation of St Andrews as the home of golf, and stimulate a return to the glory days when royalty and religious leaders were regular visitors.

In elegant script, beneath the names of the 22 original members, the first written record of the society which was to become the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, reads:

"...the Noblemen and Gentlemen above named being admired of the Ancient and healthful exercise of the Golf, and at the same time having the interest and prosperity of the ancient city of St Andrews at

heart, being the Alma Mater of the Golf, did in the year of our Lord 1754 contribute for a Silver club having a St Andrew engraved on the head thereof to be played for on the Links of St Andrews upon the fourteenth day of May said year, and yearly in time coming ..."

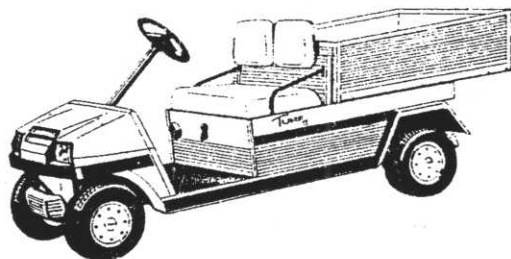
By the end of the 19th century golf, clubs throughout Britain looked to St. Andrews for guidance and the members of the R&A somewhat reluctantly agreed to take command of the rules of the game.

Their annual challenge followed an example established 10 years earlier by the Gentlemen Golfers at Leith--now known as the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers and universally recognized as the world's oldest golf club.

St. Andrews' reputation was later enhanced by the granting of royal patronage to the R&A by King William IV in 1834 and the building of an imposing clubhouse 20 years later.

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