

Willie Smith (golfer)

Willie Smith (8 October 1876 – 26 December 1916) was a Scottish golfer. He won the 1899 U.S. Open.

Early life

Willie Smith was born in Dundee, Scotland on 8 October 1876.^[1] He learned to play golf in Carnoustie. His brothers Alex and Macdonald were also expert golfers.

Golf career

1899 U.S. Open

Smith worked as a club professional at Midlothian Country Club, near Chicago, in his early adulthood. During this time he won the 1899 U.S. Open, played at Baltimore Country Club's Roland Park Course.^[2] He won by a margin of eleven shots. This record wasn't broken during the entire 20th century and wasn't surpassed until Tiger Woods won the 2000 championship by fifteen shots. Smith's prize was \$150. He played in nine U.S. Opens in total, and made the top-10 in eight of them, but he did not win again.

Western Open and California State Open

In 1899, Smith won the first Western Open in a playoff against Laurie Auchterlonie. He also won the 1900 California State Open.

Later life

In 1904, Smith moved to Mexico City to become the golf pro at the Mexico City Country Club. He was injured during the Mexican Revolution. He had refused to leave his post at the country club and was found trapped under a fallen beam after Emiliano Zapata's troops ransacked the club which they saw as a symbol of the corrupt ruling class.^[3] He was tasked with designing a new course, the Club de Golf Chapultepec, however due to his death it was completed by his brother Alex Smith. It has hosted the Mexican Open multiple times, and the WGC-Mexico Championship since 2017.^{[4][5]}

Death

He died of pneumonia on 26 December 1916.^{[6][7]} His body was returned to Scotland for burial in the family plot.

Major championships

Wins (1)

Year	Championship	54 holes	Winning score	Margin	Runners-up
1899	U.S. Open	4 shot lead	77-82-79-77=315	11 strokes	 Val Fitzjohn, George Low, Bert Way

Results timeline

Smith played in only the U.S. Open and The Open Championship.

[illegible]

Willie Smith	
	
Personal information	
Full name	William Smith
Born	8 October 1876 <div> Dundee, Scotland</div>
Died	26 December 1916 (aged 40) <div> Mexico City, Mexico</div>
Sporting nationality	 Scotland
Career	
Status	Professional
Professional wins	3
Best results in major championships (wins: 1)	
 Masters Tournament	DNP
 PGA Championship	DNP
 U.S. Open	Won: 1899
 The Open Championship	 T5: 1910

- Win
- Top 10
- Did not play

WD = withdrew

"T" indicates a tie for a place

References

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2. Brenner, Morgan G. (2009). *The Majors of Golf: Complete Results of the Open, the U.S. Open, the PGA Championship and the Masters, 1860-2008*. Vol. 1. McFarland. ISBN 978-0-7864-3360-5.
3. Kelly, Bill (4 August 2011). "Kelly's Golf History" (<http://kellysgolfhistory.blogspot.com/2011/08/willie-anderson-alex-smith.html>). *kellysgolfhistory.blogspot.com*. Retrieved 4 June 2015.
4. "Chapultepec – Mexico" (<https://www.top100golfcourses.com/golf-course/chapultepec>). *Top 100 Golf Courses*. Retrieved 21 February 2019.
5. Ralph, Pat (19 February 2019). "Five things to know about Club de Golf Chapultepec" (<https://www.golf.com/travel/2019/02/19/five-things-know-club-de-golf-chapultepec/>). *Golf.com*. Retrieved 21 February 2019.
6. "Willie Smith is Dead" (<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1916/12/27/105466162.pdf>) (PDF). *The New York Times*. 27 December 1916.
7. "Willie Smith, Golf Pro., Dies in Mexico City". *Trenton Evening Times*. New Jersey. 27 December 1916.
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9. "Open Golf Champion" (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn90059523/1902-10-12/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1902&index=1&rows=20&words=AUCHTERLONIE+Auchterlonie&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=&date2=1902&proxtext=Auchterlonie&y=18&x=16&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>). *The Saint Paul Globe*. Minnesota. 12 October 1902. Retrieved 26 August 2015.

External links

- Article on early Scottish golfers in the U.S. (<http://heritage.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=1335&id=645892005>) (including the Smith brothers)

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