



The Melfort Golf Ball

£450



REF: 30871

Diameter: 4.3 cm (1.7")

Description

Antique Gutter Golf Ball, 'The Melfort 27 ½'.

A very nice example of a 'The Melfort 27 ½' gutta-percha golf ball with moulded mesh pattern. The gutter golf ball is manufactured by W.T. Henleys Tyre & Rubber Co. Ltd., 27 Martins Lane, Cannon Street, London. The gutter golf ball is with the ball name 'The Melfort' in inverted lettering on a circular flat disc on both poles of the ball with the DWT number (27 ½) within the center. The DWT number (27½ on this ball) on old gutter golf balls refers to pennyweights (dwt), a unit of weight from the apothecaries' system. In the 19th century, golf balls-particularly gutta-percha ("gutter") balls-were sometimes marked or described by their weight in dwt, a standard gutter ball often weighed around 26-28 dwt (? 40-44 grams). Since consistency of size and weight was a big issue before standardisation, these markings helped golfers know what they were getting.

The ball is approximately 4.3 cm in diameter.

The solid gutter golf ball replaced the feathery ball because of its cost effectiveness, as a gutter could be rolled in a matter of minutes, and slowly the game of golf became affordable to the masses. The 'Gutter' era lasted from around 1848 well into 1900's.

To make a gutter golf ball first the gutta-percha was heated and loosely rolled into a ball shape. The ball was then put into the mould and then placed into a press. The press would imprint the pattern onto the ball and the excess would squeeze out of the sides. The seams were then trimmed when cool, leaving a hard and non-brittle "Gutter" golf ball. The durability of the gutta along with its lower costs and better play rejuvenated the game of golf.

Gutta-percha is the evaporated latex produced from a tree, mostly found in Malaysia.