

THE LITTLE BOOK OF  
**GOLF**



VIC BARKES

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Summersdale Publishers Ltd  
46 West Street  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 1RP  
UK

[www.summersdale.com](http://www.summersdale.com)

Printed and bound in Great Britain

ISBN 1 84024 388 0

In memory of Tom Edwards; golfer, club maker  
and jolly good bloke

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There are many different schools of thought regarding the true origins of golf but it is generally agreed that the game has its roots in Scottish soil. That said, stick and ball games (that were no doubt inspirational to the ultimate sport) have been played all over the world since God was a lad. The Romans, for instance, were fans of a game that involved a ball filled with feathers, which was driven by branches fashioned into clubs. The Celts and Huns had a similar version of the game, and the Dutch used to play a type of golf on frozen canals. In China it is claimed that a form of golf was played as early as 30 BC.



But it would appear that the source of the game as we know it today dates back to medieval times. Before then golf was simply a game – and a fairly roughy-tufty one at that – in which two teams thwacked the ball about a field with the aim of driving it into a goal.

Golf grew rapidly in popularity and by 1457 it had almost replaced archery as a pastime in Scotland – a sport that was imperative to Scotland's national defence. The powers that be pulled no punches and playing golf at the expense of neglecting your arrow practice became a hanging offence. However, the



brave Scots flew in the face of authority and continued to tee off on 'links' (seaside courses) – they had their priorities right!



*'Playing in the U.S. Open is like  
tippy-toeing through hell.'*

Jerry McGee



## Facts from the Fairway

The first ever golf club was The Gentlemen Golfers of Leith in 1744, formed to promote an annual competition with a silver golf club as the prize.

