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▼ About this capture

[14 captures](#)

29 Dec 2004 - 17 May 2019



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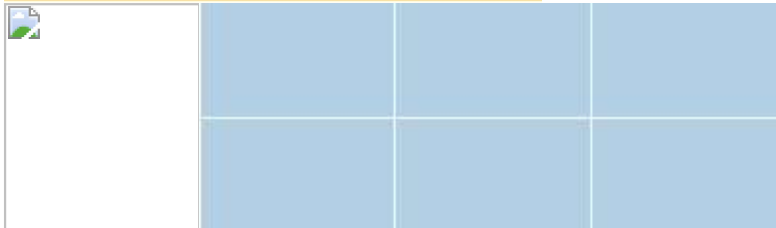
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ATHLETE PROFILE



Violet Pooley Sweeny

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She was a true golf pioneer in an era when women competed in elaborate dresses with long, flowing skirts and enormous puffed sleeves — an era when women were regarded as inferior to men in the sport.

But Violet Pooley Sweeny found a way to get around the women's course dress code and the chauvinism of the early 1900s. And in the process, the Victoria native developed a swing that led her to more than 20 championship titles in B.C. during a 30-year amateur career.

Pooley Sweeny was known as a dominant women's golfer in the province in the early part of last century. She also became known for wearing elastic bands around her waist and her puffed sleeves to ensure that her clothes interfered as little as possible with her swing.

She played by the theory that a great golfer must learn to play full, half and quarter shots with the same club. Needless to say, the tactic worked for her.

Pooley Sweeny was born in 1886 in Victoria and spent much of her childhood caddying for her father, C.E. Pooley, earning just 25 cents a round. She obviously learned a lot from him because, in 1905, she won both the B.C. Ladies' and Pacific Northwest Golf Association Championships in her first attempts.

She won seven provincial trophies as a member of the Victoria Golf Club before moving to Vancouver and marrying well-known rower Campbell Sweeny in 1919. There she joined the Jericho Golf Club and completed an amateur career that eventually included a total of nine B.C. championships and seven Pacific Northwest titles between 1905 and 1929. Her record of nine B.C. amateur titles stood for more than 50 years until Marilyn Palmer O'Connor of Kamloops tied it.

Pooley Sweeny also won the Vancouver city and district championship seven times between 1923 and 1935, along with an Oregon women's championship title in 1909.

In 1911, she reached the fourth round of the British women's championship before losing to the eventual titlist. Two years later, she became the first overseas player to reach the semifinals of the tournament.

Canada

Canadian Quick Facts

Population: 31,752,842
(As of Jan. 1/04,
Statscan)

Women make up just
over half the population
at 50.48%

The most popular sports
among Canadian women
(Statscan '98):

1. Swimming
2. Golf
3. Baseball

Other Resources:

[Canadian Association for
the Advancement of
Women In Sport and
Physical Activity](#)

[Canadian Olympic
Committee](#)

[Canadian Paralympic
Committee](#)

[Official site of the 2010
Vancouver Winter
Olympic and Paralympic
Games](#)

[Sport Canada](#)

[To Do Canada](#). This site
lists sports links for the
physically disabled in
Canada.

[The Canadian
Interuniversity Sport
\(CIS\)](#) is the national
governing body of
university sport in
Canada.

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B.C. Sports Hall of Fame, the Pacific Northwest Golf Hall of Fame, and mostly recently, the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame in 1998.

Due to travel concerns, Pooley Sweeny competed in just two Canadian championships. Even though she never managed to win a national championship, she is considered one of Canada's great female players.

Major Achievements

- WW - Nine-time B.C. champion
- WW - Seven-time Pacific Northwest champion
- WW - Oregon state champion, 1909
- WW - Made fourth round of British Ladies' championship, 1911
- WW - British Ladies' championship semifinalist, 1913
- WW - Founder, Canadian Ladies' Golf Union
- WW - B.C. Sports Hall of Fame, 1974
- WW - Pacific Northwest Golf Hall of Fame
- WW - Canadian Golf Hall of Fame, 1998

Photo of Violet Pooley Sweeney courtesy of BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum

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