



Tommy Armour



Armour in 1927

Personal information

Full name	Thomas Dickson Armour
Nickname	<i>The Silver Scot</i>
Born	24 September 1896 Edinburgh, Scotland
Died	11 September 1968 (aged 71) Larchmont, New York
Nationality	 Scotland  United States

Career

College	Fettes College University of Edinburgh
Turned professional	1924
Former tour(s)	PGA Tour
Professional wins	27

Number of wins by tour

PGA Tour	25
Other	2

Best results in major championships (wins: 3)	
Masters Tournament	T8: 1937
PGA Championship	Won: 1930
U.S. Open	Won: 1927
The Open Championship	Won: 1931
U.S. Amateur	T5: 1920
British Amateur	T33: 1920, 1921
Achievements and awards	
World Golf Hall of Fame	1976 (<i>member page</i>)

Early life

Armour was born on 24 September 1896 in [Edinburgh](#), Scotland, the son of Martha Dickson and her husband George Armour, a baker. He went to school at [Boroughmuir High School](#), Edinburgh, (formerly Boroughmuir Senior Secondary School) and studied at the [University of Edinburgh](#).^[3] At the outbreak of World War I enlisted with the [Black Watch](#) and was a machine-gunner, he rose from a private to Staff Major in the [Tank Corps](#). His conduct earned him an audience with [George V](#). However, he lost his sight to a [mustard gas](#) explosion and surgeons had to add a metal plate to his head and left arm. During his convalescence, he regained the sight of his right eye, and began playing much more golf.^[4]

Golf career

Armour won the French Amateur tournament in 1920. He moved to the United States and met Walter Hagen who gave him a job as secretary of the [Westchester-Biltmore Club](#).^[3] He competed in important amateur tournaments in the U.S. before turning professional in 1924.

Armour won the 1927 [U.S. Open](#), 1930 [PGA Championship](#), and the 1931 [Open Championship](#). With [Jim Barnes](#) and [Rory McIlroy](#), he is one of three natives of [The United Kingdom](#) to win three different professional majors.^[5] His 1930 campaign was overshadowed by Bobby Jones' Grand Slam, and Armour seems to have been overlooked.

Armour also won the [Canadian Open](#) three times, a feat exceeded only by Leo Diegel, who won four.

At the [Shawnee Open](#) in 1927, Armour scored the first ever "archaeopteryx" (15 or more over par) when he made a 23 on a par 5, for 18 over par. It still stands as the highest score on a hole in PGA history. This historic performance happened just one week after he'd won the U.S. Open.

Retirement and later life

Armour retired from full-time professional golf after the 1935 season, although he competed periodically in top-class events for several years afterwards. He taught at the [Boca Raton Club](#) in Florida from 1926 to 1955,^[6] for \$50 a lesson. His pupils included [Babe Didrikson Zaharias](#) and [Lawson Little](#). He was also a member at the [Winged Foot Golf Club](#) in suburban [New York City](#), where he spent much of his summers.^[7]

After becoming an American citizen in November 1942,^[8] Armour played in exhibitions for [USO](#) and [Red Cross](#) during [World War II](#).

Armour co-wrote a book *How to Play Your Best Golf All the Time* (1953) with [Herb Graffis](#). It became a best-seller and for many years was the biggest-selling book ever authored on golf. A series of 8mm films based on the book was released by Castle Films including Short Game Parts I and II, Long Hitting Clubs, Grip, and Stance.

Armour is succeeded by his grandson, [Tommy Armour III](#), who is a two-time winner on the [PGA Tour](#).

Death and legacy

Armour died in [Larchmont, New York](#) and was cremated at the [Ferncliff Cemetery](#) in [Hartsdale, New York](#) but not interred there. Some modern golf equipment is still marketed in his name. Armour was inducted into the [World Golf Hall of Fame](#) in 1976.

Amateur wins

- 1920 French Amateur

Professional wins

PGA Tour wins (25)

- 1920 (1) Pinehurst Fall Pro-Am Bestball (as an amateur, with [Leo Diegel](#))
- 1925 (1) Florida West Coast Open
- 1926 (1) Winter Pro Golf Championship

- 1927 (5) [Long Beach Open](#), [El Paso Open](#), **U.S. Open**, [Canadian Open](#), [Oregon Open](#)
- 1928 (4) [Metropolitan Open](#), [Philadelphia Open Championship](#), [Pennsylvania Open Championship](#), [Sacramento Open](#)
- 1929 (1) [Western Open](#)
- 1930 (3) [Canadian Open](#), **PGA Championship**, [St. Louis Open](#)
- 1931 (1) **The Open Championship**
- 1932 (3) [Miami International Four-Ball](#) (with [Ed Dudley](#)), [Mid-South Bestball](#) (with [Al Watrous](#)), [Miami Open](#)
- 1934 (2) [Canadian Open](#), [Pinehurst Fall Pro-Pro](#) (with [Bobby Cruickshank](#))
- 1935 (1) [Miami Open](#)
- 1936 (1) [Walter Olson Golf Tournament](#) (tie with [Willie Macfarlane](#))
- 1938 (1) [Mid-South Open](#)




[Major championships](#) are shown in **bold**.

Other wins

- 1927 [Miami International Four-Ball](#) (with [Bobby Cruickshank](#))
- 1938 [Mid South Pro/Pro](#) (with [Bobby Cruickshank](#); tie with [Henry Picard](#) and [Jack Grout](#))

Major championships

Wins (3)

Year	Championship	54 holes	Winning score	Margin	Runner-up
1927	U.S. Open	1 shot deficit	+13 (78-71-76-76=301)	Playoff ¹	 Harry Cooper
1930	PGA Championship	n/a	1 up		 Gene Sarazen
1931	The Open Championship	5 shot deficit	+8 (73-75-77-71=296)	1 stroke	 José Jurado

¹ Defeated Harry Cooper in an 18-hole playoff: Armour 76 (+4), Cooper 79 (+7).

Note: The PGA Championship was match play until 1958

Results timeline

Tournament	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
U.S. Open	T48			WD	T13	T38	T9	1	16	T5
The Open Championship	T53						13		CUT	10
PGA Championship						QF		QF	R32	
U.S. Amateur	QF	R16	R32		–	–	–	–	–	–
The Amateur Championship	R64	R64			–	–	–	–	–	–

Tournament	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
Masters Tournament	NYF	NYF	NYF	NYF		T37	T20	T8		T12
U.S. Open	6	T46	T21	T4	T50	WD	T22	CUT	23	T22
The Open Championship		1	T17							
PGA Championship	1	QF			R16	2	R64	R64		

Tournament	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
Masters Tournament	38	38	T28	NT	NT	NT					
U.S. Open	T12	CUT	NT	NT	NT	NT	CUT	CUT	WD		CUT
The Open Championship	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT					
PGA Championship				NT							

Win

Top 10

Did not play

NYF = tournament not yet founded

NT = no tournament

WD = withdrew

CUT = missed the half-way cut

R64, R32, R16, QF, SF = round in which player lost in match play

"T" indicates a tie for a place

Sources: U.S. Open and U.S. Amateur,^[9] Amateur Championship:1920,^[10] 1921^[11]

Team appearances

Amateur

- [Great Britain vs USA](#) (representing Great Britain): 1921

Professional

- [Great Britain vs USA](#) (representing the United States): 1926

See also

- [List of golfers with most PGA Tour wins](#)

Notes

1. ["Births in the District of Newington in the City of Edinburgh"](#) . *Statutory Births 685/05 1134*. [ScotlandsPeople](#). Retrieved 16 February 2015.
2. [Barkow, Al](#) (1998). *Golf Legends of All Time*. Publications International. ISBN 978-0785328483.
3. [Vamplew, Vray](#) (23 September 2014). ["Armour, Thomas Dickson \[Tommy\] \(1896–1968\), golfer"](#) . *www.oxforddnb.com*. doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/65141 . Retrieved 3 February 2019.
4. [Davidson, Jack](#) (11 August 2015). ["Tommy Armour: the Scotsman who won the US PGA"](#) . *The Scotsman*. Retrieved 21 December 2020.
5. ["1931 Tommy Armour"](#) . The Open. Archived from [the original](#) on 16 October 2013. Retrieved 16 October 2013.
6. [May, Mike](#). ["Golf @ The Boca Resort: Living, Breathing History"](#) . Go Golf and Travel.
7. [Harmon, Butch](#) (2006). *The Pro* . Crown Publishers.
8. ["U.S. Naturalization Record Indexes, 1791-1992"](#) – via Ancestry.com.
9. [USGA Championship Database](#) Archived 21 December 2010 at the [Wayback Machine](#)
10. ["Amateur Golf: The Muirfield Week: Many Favourites Out"](#) . *The Glasgow Herald*. Glasgow, Scotland. 9 June 1920. p. 11. Retrieved 9 March 2011.
11. ["Golf At Hoylake: Amateur Championship"](#) . *The Glasgow Herald*. Glasgow, Scotland. 25 May 1921. p. 6. Retrieved 9 March 2011.

External links

- [World Golf Hall of Fame profile](#)
- [Biography of Tommy Armour](#)
- [Tommy Armour – The Greatest \(Dr Milton Wayne\)](#)
- [Tommy Armour](#) at [Find a Grave](#)
- [\[1\]](#)

