

THE FRENCH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

VICTORY FOR JEAN GASSIAT

BY OUR BRITISH CORRESPONDENT

The French Open Championship, which is always held on the course of the Société de Golf de Paris, at La Boulie, near Versailles, about a dozen miles out of Paris, increases in interest and importance every year, and with all of the leading British professionals, a strong body of Frenchmen and an American, McDermott, taking part in it, I thought it would be worth going over to see, and went. It is decided on Open Championship lines, four rounds of stroke play, and the prizes are of the same value as they are in the British Open Championship, while the competitors always have a good and pleasant time at La Boulie, and the meeting is much enjoyed.

The holder of the championship before this meeting began was the Frenchman, Arnaud Massy, who had won it twice in previous years. J. H.

Taylor has twice been the victor and Braid once. The lengths of the holes on the La Boulie course which is laid out round a big hill and was in splendid condition for the tournament, are as follows:

Out—407 397 143 506 372 148 517 281 280—3051
 In —220 525 340 300 363 200 450 430 330—3,158

Total length (yards) 6,209

The championship began on Monday, July 1, when the first and second rounds were played. Harry Vardon was in great form at the beginning and did a round of 71 in which he displayed his best skill. He was playing his long game perfectly and laying his long putts stone dead all the time. His only mistakes were a pulled tee shot into the bunker at the short fifteenth, but he made a good recovery and obtained his 3, and he took five strokes to the last hole, being too strong with his approach and



McDermott putting on the ninth green at LaBoulie in the French Open championship.

then needing three more to get down. His score read as follows.

Out—4 4 3 5 4 3 5 4 4—36
In —3 5 3 4 4 3 4 4 5—35—71

In this round Taylor did one stroke worse than Vardon, and Mayo, Braid and George Duncan and Reid two worse, while McDermott, who made a bad start, as he has done in almost every competition round he has played in his eastern trip, did 75, as follows:

Out—6 5 3 5 4 3 5 4 4—39
In —3 5 4 4 4 2 5 4 5—36—75

He topped his first two drives, and did so again at the eighth, and was out of bounds when driving to the last hole. He had no luck with his putts.

In the second round both Edward Ray and Tom Ball did scores of 71 each, the play in both cases being very fine; Ray, as usual, driving a ball of enormous length. His card read:

Out—4 4 2 5 4 4 5 4 4—36
In —3 5 4 4 4 2 5 4 4—35—71

Tom Ball's figures were as follows:

Out—4 4 3 5 5 2 4 4 4—35
In —3 5 4 5 4 3 4 4 4—36—71

In this round McDermott did just one stroke better than in the morning, and generally played a more even game, having made a much better start. His card was:

Out—4 4 5 4 4 3 5 4 4—37
In —4 5 4 4 4 3 5 4 4—37—74

The result of the day's play was that Harry Vardon, who had put on a 73 in the afternoon, led the field with an aggregate of 144, George Duncan being second with 145. McDermott made a tie for eleventh place with W. F. Reid.

On the following morning there was some sensational play by two of the Frenchmen, Jean Gassiat, the professional at Chantilly, another of the clubs near Paris, and Louis Tellier, the professional at La Boulie. Both of these men did rounds of 68,

which is a record for the course, and in each case it was wonderful putting that did it. Gassiat, who comes from the southwest corner of France, where Arnaud Massy came from, actually only took eleven putts on the first nine greens. His round was:

Out—4 3 2 4 4 3 4 3 4—31
In —3 5 4 4 4 4 5 4 4—37—68

Gassiat was doing his putting with a wooden putter, and Tellier with a putting cleek. The former is quite the Frenchman in appearance, and is tall and thin and about twenty-eight years old. He was in the prize list at Muirfield, and is undoubtedly a golfer of great ability. Tellier is quite a different type, short and thick, and rather English in his looks and ways. He made his round of 68 as follows.

Out—4 4 3 4 5 3 5 3 4—35
In —3 5 4 4 4 2 4 4 3—33—68

In this round McDermott played better golf than he had done at any other time since he crossed the Atlantic, and really seemed to have found his game. He did a 70, which would have been a 68 and would have tied for the record of the course if he could have holed a yard putt on the eighteenth green. He missed that putt and the return putt as well. Otherwise his game was excellent, even though there were traces of shakiness at the start. His score was:

Out—5 5 3 6 4 3 4 4 4—38
In —2 4 4 4 3 3 4 5 3—32—70

Harry Vardon did a 74 in this round, and the result was that the Frenchmen caught him up, he and those two being at the top with 216 each at lunch time, and McDermott being next with 219.

It was a hard fight in the afternoon, and Harry Vardon, who was playing in front of both Gassiat and Tellier, was one stroke better than Gassiat at the turn and two better than Tellier.

Gassiat, however, gained on him in the last half, and had the championship well in hand while he was playing the last three holes, so that even though he put his tee shot out of bounds at the eighteenth it made very little difference. It might be added that on the home green Vardon nearly holed a three-yard put. If it had actually gone down he would have tied for the championship, as he was only beaten by one stroke, his round being 74 to Gassiat's 73. McDermott's score was the same as Harry Vardon's and for the sake of comparison I will just give those two in the fourth round and no others. Vardon's was as follows:

Out—5 4 3 4 5 3 5 3 4—36
 In —3 5 4 5 5 3 5 4 4—38—74

McDermott's figures were:

Out—5 4 3 5 3 4 5 4 3—36
 In —4 4 4 4 4 3 6 4 5—38—74

I should add that the British professionals complained that not only were the greens too stiff for proper putting but that the course was far too easy for a championship test, and that, with no wind at all either, they had no opportunity of showing their real capabilities.

The full scores at the finish were as follows:

	1st rd.	2d rd.	3d rd.	4th rd.	Ag'-gate
J. Gassiat, Chantilly.	74	74	68	73	—289
H. Vardon, South Herts.	71	73	72	74	—290
L. Tellier, La Boulie.	76	72	68	75	—291
E. Ray, Oxhey.	77	71	73	71	—292
J. J. McDermott, Atlantic City, U. S. A.	75	74	70	74	—293
C. Mayo, Burhill.	73	74	75	72	—294
R. Gommier, La Boulie.	74	72	77	71	—294
J. H. Taylor, Mid-Surrey.	72	76	71	74	—295
A. Massy, Nivelles.	75	73	75	74	—296
E. Laffitte, La Boulie.	75	75	70	77	—297
G. Duncan, Hanger Hill.	73	72	77	75	—297
Tom Ball, Raynes Park.	77	71	77	73	—298
W. E. Reid, Banstead Downs.	73	76	76	74	—299
J. Braid, Walton Heath.	73	77	73	77	—300
J. B. Ross, Park Langley Rowland Jones, Wimbledon Park.	76	79	75	73	—303
R. Golias, La Boulie.	74	76	80	77	—307
Hon. M. Scott, R. N. Devon.	78	76	77	76	—307
J. Piper, Southerndown.	77	79	78	75	—309
A. J. Sanderson, Prince's J. Pannell, Knocke-s-Mer.	76	78	78	80	—312
C. Gassiat, La Boulie.	79	78	77	81	—315
A. E. Baggs, Willingdom Mr. S. H. Fry, R. N. Devon.	78	79	82	77	—316
83	72	81	81	—317	
G. Golias, La Boulie.	78	79	84	77	—318
J. Orengo, La Boulie.	84	79	87	81	—331

