

# The Davis Cup—Most Eagerly Sought Trophy in the History of Sport

**Played For Sixteen Times, Won Five Times by United States—Fifteen Nations In Competition This Year To Be Finally Settled at Forest Hills on Labor Day.**

Copyright, 1922 (New York Evening World) by Press Publishing Company.

**T**HE eyes of the civilized world will be turned toward Boston, Philadelphia and Forest Hills, L. I., during the next month to watch the progress of the greatest sporting event of modern times—the play for the Dwight F. Davis International Tennis Cup. Contest for the Davis Cup dwarfs every other form of competition between nations, for the Davis Cup is the most coveted trophy on earth.

The Davis Cup is a large silver bowl, delicately decorated, resting upon a silver platter. It is worth, at most, \$1,500 in actual money, yet it is the ambition of fifteen nations, far-flung across the surface of the globe, to possess this cup. Yearly thousands of dollars, hours of time, desperate determination and heart-breaking effort are invested in the hope of winning it, and of having inscribed upon it the imperishable record of this achievement.

In the twenty-two years in which the Davis Cup has been in competition more than one hundred of the greatest tennis players of all time have striven to win it. Glorious names of the court, like those of the Dohertys, William A. Larned, Norman E. Brookes, Anthony F. Wilding, Maurice E. Loughlin, William M. Johnston, William T. Tilden and many others are engraved upon the rim of the cup. Indeed, it is because so many names have been engraved upon it that the addition of the platter became necessary.

There is no sporting event that attracts the competition of as many nations as does that for the Davis Cup, not even barring the Olympic Games. These draw many entries, and the international polo matches attract attention when they are played, and the world is mildly interested when efforts are made to lift the America's Cup of yachting supremacy.

When our Britishisms, et al., are abroad to compete for the British golf title, or Englishmen cross the sea to have a try at the new Walker golf cups there is decided interest, but nothing that compares with the enthusiasm aroused by the annual contest for the Davis Cup.

Dwight F. Davis, today a member of the War Finance Corporation in Washington but once an intercollegiate and international tennis champion (and no trifling player, even now), gave the cup in 1900 in the hope that it would inspire international competition and broaden interest in tennis.

He builded better than he knew, and since has said that if he had dreamed the trophy would attain such a pinnacle in the world of sport he would have donated a cup of gold.

When Davis gave the cup international competition meant, largely, contests between Great Britain and the United States. There were players of promise in Australia and New Zealand, players who in a few short years made Australasia a formidable competitor and many times winner of the cup, and tennis had large followings on the Continent, but no players to rank with the stars of England and the United States. Since then, and largely because of the allure of the trophy, nation after nation has qualified for the right to challenge for the cup, until this year fifteen nations, the greatest number yet to participate, have striven to reach the challenge round.

Three rounds of the five rounds necessary in the cup competition this year have been played. France, Australasia and Spain remain for the

fourth and final rounds, the winner of which gains the right to meet the United States, holder of the cup and champion of the world. England won the right to play Spain, but defaulted, bringing Spain through to meet the winner of the matches being played in Boston between France and Australasia. This final round will be played in Philadelphia Aug. 17, 18 and 19, and the winner will meet the United States at Forest Hills Sept. 1, 2 and 4 (Labor Day).

The United States has won the cup five times, but has held it for six years, as England withdrew one challenge, leaving a year in which no one sought to lift the trophy. Australasia retained the cup one year in a similar manner. Australasia has won the cup six times, but has held it seven years, not counting the interval of the war, when competition was out of the question. Australasia also bids fair to be in the challenge round this year, as many think it doubtful that France will be able to win at Boston, or Spain at Philadelphia.

The United States, say those who should know, should defeat whoever does reach the challenge round, and the Davis Cup remain here for at least one more year. The only other nation, thus far, to have won the cup is England, which has five victories to her credit.

The romance of the Davis Cup would fill a book. To tell the story of the glorious contests that have been fought over the tennis courts of the world and to detail the journeys of the trophy across the seven seas would fill volumes. No nation

now competes for the Davis Cup except after a most careful selection of its representatives and a most adequate preparation for the great event, and perhaps this more than anything else reveals the esteem in which the cup is held.

When the first British team came to the United States in 1900 to contest for the Davis Cup the Englishmen thought so little of American prowess on the courts that they went sightseeing and revelled in the glories of Niagara Falls and the odors of the stock yards in Chicago when they

should have been in practice to accustom themselves. The result, naturally, was an overwhelming victory for the American players, who included Davis, donor of the cup.

The British at once challenged for the succeeding year, but could not get a team together and withdrew the challenge. They tried again in 1902, only to lose, but managed to lift the cup for the first time, in 1903, and it remained for four years in the British Isles. Then Australasia, which had been contesting for several years by that time, won the cup and took it to the South Seas, where it remained for five years, until Great Britain recaptured it in 1912.

In 1912 the cup came home again, largely due to brilliant play by Maurice E. Loughlin, who the following year was to make tennis history. The cup had been away ten years and its return was hailed with delight for seven nations competed in the contests through which the United States had to fight its way to the right to challenge the British Isles. Australasia, eliminated by the United States in 1913, was not to be denied in 1914 and won the cup just before the outbreak of the World War. Incidentally, the German team was on its way home from America when hostilities began and was interned in Gibraltar throughout the war, which probably was a very fortunate and a very healthy thing for the players.

There will be many matches in the unending procession of Davis Cup contests yet to be played that stretch ahead into the future and live stories of golden grain will sit through the staff of play with little to make it distinctive, but it is safe to predict that as long as the Davis Cup retains a vestige of its shape, as long as racquets clash and balls sing across the net, the story of the Loughlin-Brookes duel of 1914 will lead all the rest. In their singles match the two extraordinary players and remarkable fighters went a first set to 17-15 before Loughlin succeeded in winning it.

Wilding unexpectedly had defeated it, Norris Williams 20, so with one match against his team Loughlin went into the contest to do or die. Succinctly described in the 1911 edition of American Lawn Tennis, this is what happened:

"A titanic battle ensued, from which the Californian emerged victorious after one of the finest and closest matches in the history of the game. The first set will go thundering down ever seen, the greatest exhibition of the ages as the greatest exhibition ever seen. Loughlin captured it at 17-15, and with it, cut all hope of Brookes winning. Only the possession of the superabundant vitality and pre-emptive skill enabled the Californian to nose out ahead. The set lasted for well over an hour and as it pro-



DWIGHT F. DAVIS



MAURICE E. McLOUGHLIN • NORMAN E. BROOKES  
The Match between Brookes and McLoughlin in 1913 was the most spectacular of all Davis Cup Contests.



WILLIAM T. TILDEN, 2<sup>nd</sup> American National Tennis Champion.



WILLIAM M. JOHNSTON  
Who will, with Tilden, form the bulwark of the Cup defense



### WINNERS OF THE DAVIS TENNIS CUP.

1900 United States defeated British Isles	1909 Australasia defeated United States
1902 United States defeated British Isles	1911 Australasia defeated United States
1903 British Isles defeated United States	1912 British Isles defeated Australasia
1904 British Isles defeated Belgium	1913 United States defeated British Isles
1905 British Isles defeated United States	1914 Australasia defeated United States
1906 British Isles defeated United States	1919 Australasia defeated British Isles
1907 Australasia defeated British Isles	1920 United States defeated Australasia
1908 Australasia defeated United States	1921 United States defeated Japan

crossed the immense gallery sat spell-bound and amazed. It did not seem possible that two men could make such shots and deliver such service as they did for a term long enough for three ordinary sets; and the suspense as to which would "crack" first became so intense that many of the spectators were at the end of the match that had been wrung out appearing up to dry."

When Loughlin at last broke through Brookes's service and won he quickly annexed the other game.

Because of the war the cup remained in the possession of Australasia until 1920. France, Belgium, the British Isles, and South Africa challenged in 1919, but Australasia turned back the British attack, after the English had fought their way through finals with France, South Africa and Belgium having been early eliminated. In 1920 the United States again brought the cup home and successfully defended it in 1921 against the Japanese team, which eliminated the Australians in the finals.

This year Canada, France, Belgium, Australasia, Hawaii, Czechoslovakia, Spain, the Philippines, Roumania, India, Italy, Japan, Denmark and the British Isles all challenged. Canada was forced to default to France, which eliminated Denmark, 4-1, and Belgium was eliminated by Australasia, 4-0, with one match unplayed. Hawaii defaulted to Czechoslovakia, which was eliminated by Australasia, 5-0. Spain won from the Philippines by default and put India out of the running, 4-1, after India had eliminated Roumania, 5-0. Italy won from Japan by default, but lost to the British Isles, 4-1, and Spain came to the fourth round when the British Isles defaulted. Thus matters stand.

Whoever wins between France and Australasia (Aug. 19, 11 and 12) at Boston will meet Spain in Philadelphia, as has been said.

In one thing the Davis Cup contests are unique, and that is in the simplicity of regulations which govern the play. The champion nation has the responsibility of arranging the competition. Challenges must reach the champion nation by May 15. Within three days thereafter must make the "blind" draw. The name of each nation is written on a separate slip of paper, these are shuffled, placed in a box, drawn at random and bracketed, exactly as entries would be in an ordinary tennis championship. Then the champion nation studies the draw, decides where the matches can best be played for all countries concerned, and the dates by which the rounds must be completed in order to conclude the contest in the current year, and each nation is notified by cable of the draw, with the recommendation for the date and place of matches, and a request that it arrange with its competitor the details. Each nation pays the expenses of its team from the funds of its tennis association. Gate receipts are charged for the matches and the profits are divided equally among the competitors in any given match to reimburse them for their outlay of traveling expenses. And that is about all there is to the Davis Cup regulations.

Aside from their eminence in the field of sports, the Davis Cup contests have another aspect of tremendous importance. They do more to promote good-will and understanding between peoples than any one other single factor. Glance at the fifteen nations in competition this year. Could anything be more conglomerate than the races represented? Customs may differ, languages may not be the same and players may not understand the scores as they are sung out in strange tongues, but the rules of tennis are similar the world over. The score of Love 30 or deuce may be cried in weird-sounding words to those who know only English, but the meaning is the same and the spirit of international brotherhood meets across the tennis nets after each contest when victor meets vanquished and both smile as they congratulate each other on the fine sport displayed.

Indeed, as Dwight Davis said at the banquet for the team that brought back the trophy in 1920:

"Sportsmanship knows no national boundaries."

"Sportsmanship knows no national boundaries."

"Sportsmanship knows no national boundaries."