PALMER IN THE LEAD.

THE YOUNG EXPERT OF THE LARCHMONT YACHT CLUB SHOOTS WELL.

A Strong Field of Amateur Wing Shots Meet for a $250 Cup and the Championship—George Work Loses Six Birds Out of Fifty, but Stands Second—Dr. Wynn and Davenport Kill Forty-three Each—Shooting Will Be Resumed This Morning.

What promises to be one of the most interesting pigeon shooting competitions ever held in this country began yesterday morning at Larchmont. The contest is nominally for the amateur live-bird championship of the United States and a cup valued at $250 offered by the Larchmont Yacht Club. Then there will be something like $1,000 in cash divided between the first four men. The outcome of the competition is causing any amount of speculation among wing shots. With the exception of Fred Hoey, who is abroad; L. S. Thompson, who is ill; Edgar Murphy, whose business will not permit him to shoot, and Robert A. Welch of Philadelphia, every well-known amateur in the country was represented yesterday.

There were eleven entries in all, but only nine faced the traps. They were J. K. Palmer, Capt. A. W. Money, L. T. Davenport, Dr. William Wynn, and Fred G. Moore of the Larchmont Yacht Club, George Work of the Cartaret Gun Club, Cornelius Ferguson, Jr., of the New Utrecht Gun Club, and W. S. Edey and B. Madison of the Westchester County Club. As the conditions called for 100 birds for each man, only half of the match was shot, time being called at the end of the fifteenth round, when, to the surprise of many, young J. K. Palmer was in the lead with a score of 46 killed out of a possible 50 birds. The other scores were: George Work, 44; Dr. Wynn, 43; L. T. Davenport, 43; F. G. Moore, 42; C. Ferguson, Jr., 41; Capt. Money, 38; W. S. Edey, 36; B. Madison, 33.

Among the competitors, first and foremost comes George Work, who at various times has beaten about every pigeon shooter of note in the country, including the professionals Brewer and Fulford. Work holds a record of 98 out of 100 birds, and when in form is considered almost invincible. Of late his work has hardly been up to the usual standard, but he is a safe 90-bird man under any and all conditions. In spite of the fact that he now two birds behind in this contest, his friends say he will yet pull the match out of the fire.

J. K. Palmer, the young expert who took the lead yesterday, though he has only been interested in pigeon shooting for the past two years, is now in the very first rank of wing shots. Palmer, in addition to having a good eye for pigeons, is one of the most expert billiard players in the country, while S. Oddie, the amateur champion, being the only amateur who can hold him on even terms.

L. T. Davenport, another shooter, who it is expected may yet finish in first place, had all the worst of the luck, and killed far more than his share of hard birds yesterday. As he is one of the gamest shots in the country, his friends think that he will be able to retrieve himself to-day. As a sweepstake shooter Davenport is at his best, and there are few tournaments in which he does not carry off the lion's share of the prize money.

Capt. Money, who finished yesterday with the rather poor total for him of 38 birds out of 50, is probably won more matches than any other man of his day. Some years ago when he arrived from England he made and won something like a score of matches, and, incidentally, a barrel of money from such experts as Edgar Murphy, Fred Hoey, George Work, I. T. Davenport, and others. His eyesight is not as good as it used to be, or he would undoubtedly give them all a run for their money yet. He has a beautifully turned second barrel, which some of his younger rivals might do well to copy.

Fred G. Moore is a quick, nervous shooter, and when in form makes some remarkably high scores. Last year while shooting at Hurlingham and the Gun Club Grounds in England, he was the only one of the American contingent to make any sort of a showing, and won more than the big sweep.

Dr. Wynn, while not quite as young as he used to be, seems to be able to handle a gun still, and yesterday held the lead up to the twenty-third bird hit in the first round. Of the other three, Ferguson is considered one of the cracks of the Gravesend district, while Edey and Madison are regarded as the pick of the Westchester colony.

Such an aggregate of talent naturally brought out a big crowd of spectators, and the club house, shooting box, and platforms facing the traps were thronged with an eager crowd of city men and wing shots, among the more prominent being De Forrest Manice, Gouverneur Kortright, O. W. Bird, Gerard M. Barretts, Robert A. Bull, L. T. Duryea, William P. Brixey, Newberry D. Thorne, W. H. Harper, Frank Duryea, William Potts, Arthur Duane, L. Q. Jones, W. T. Wilcox, the Hon. Henry A. Gildersleeve, H. B. Fessenden, Chauncey Kerr, J. S. Taylor, George I. Seney, William T. Murray, and F. T. Felton.

The conditions of the contest call for 100 live birds each, $100 entrance fee. The rise is thirty yards and boundary fifty yards. After the club deducts 10 per cent. of the gross receipts the winner will receive a $250 silver cup and 45 per cent. of the entrance; the second man 25 per cent., while the remaining 25 per cent. will be divided between the third and fourth men.

There was little delay in starting the match. Referee John S. Hoey called time at 11:04 o'clock. Palmer was the first to step to the score and knocked over an easy left-quarterer with his second barrel. Work followed by killing a fast right-quarterer with his first barrel. Dr. Wynn then filled a screaming left-quarterer driver full of lead, while Madison needed both barrels for another bird in the same direction. Ferguson got a fast one, but the dog was quick enough to catch him in time. Edey caught a fast left-quarterer, and Davenport respected a right-quartering slate-colored phantom, as did Moore. Capt. Money caught a lightning-like driver from No. 2 trap. He hit him hard with both barrels, but the bird escaped only to die outside the boundary.

In the second round Madison and Moore both came to grief. Singularly enough, both caught drivers, and Moore's died outside of bounds. The third round was a duplicate of the first. Capt. Money being the only one to miss. In the fifth round Work missed what looked like an easy bird. It hopped up and dropped just under his first barrel, and then dived right from under his second. "A very puzzling bird" was the general verdict.

At the end of the tenth round the score stood: Dr. Wynn, 10; Davenport, 10; Palmer, 9, the latter losing his tenth bird, a twisting towerer, which died outside; Work, 9; Moore, 9; Madison, 8; Ferguson, 8; Edey, 8; Money, 8. Palmer then had a little more hard luck when his twelfth, a straight driver, hit hard with both barrels, dropped dead outside. Work also lost his fourteenth bird, a left-quartering driver. While Davenport, who seemed to be drawing all the hard birds, had his eleventh, a driver, and his fifteenth, a right-quartering driver, die outside. Moore lost his sixteenth bird, which also dropped dead outside. This gave Dr. Wynn a clear lead of one over his nearest competitor, as his only miss up to this point was in the sixteenth round, when a tricky driver got over the boundary and died outside.

Misses were more frequent toward the end of the first twenty-five birds, though the leaders held their own pretty well. Palmer apparently had struck his gait, for he made no more misses, winding up the first quarter of the match with a score of 24. Work and Davenport also had the same score. Moore and Dr. Wynn tied with 23 each, while Edey killed 21, Ferguson 20, Money 19, and Madison 18.

Palmer kept up his good work in the second quarter. His first miss was on his fortieth bird, a deceptive towerer. He also missed his forty-fourth, another twisting bird, winding up with another string of 23, or a total of 46. Work lost his twenty-ninth, thirtieth, thirty-sixth, and thirty-ninth birds; Dr. Wynn missed his thirty-sixth, forty-second, forty-third, and forty-eighth birds; Davenport lost his twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, forty-first, forty-third, and fifteenth birds, all drivers. Moore missed his twenty-eighth, thirty-third, thirty-fourth, thirty-ninth, and forty-seventh birds; Ferguson lost his twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, thirtieth, and thirty-seventh birds; Money missed his twenty-seventh, thirty-first, thirty-third, thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, and forty-first birds; Edey missed his twenty-ninth, thirty-first, thirty-second, thirty-third, thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth, forty-first, forty-fourth, and forty-eighth birds, while Madison missed his twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, thirty-third, thirty-fourth, thirty-ninth, forty-third, forty-fourth, forty-sixth, and forty-eighth birds.

While the birds were an unusually fast lot, there was absolutely no wind, and the conditions, except the light, which was good, were in favor of the shooters. Davenport, Moore, Palmer, Work, and Dr. Wynn got more than their fair share of fast birds.

The shooting will be resumed this morning on the arrival of the 10:06 train from this city, and it thought that the competition will be over by 3:30 o'clock. While Palmer is thought to have the best chance to win, Work, Davenport, Edey, and Moore are within easy hailing distance of the young Larchmont expert. Summary:

J. K. Palmer, Larchmont Club—

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