



Victorian Lawn Tennis Ball. Schotten Tennis Museum Collection. Not For Sale.



REF: 25427

Diameter: 6.5 cm (2.6")

Description

Victorian Lawn Tennis Ball.

A rare early lawn tennis ball with a cloth cover and hand stitched seams. The cover is made from two pieces of white cloth and cover a thin-walled hollow India rubber ball. The remains of 'regulation' can be found written on the cover of the ball. It is knowN that F. H. Ayres were one of the first companies to make regulation Lawn tennis balls in the 1880's.

From the outset India rubber balls were used for playing Lawn Tennis, unlike Real Tennis that used solid balls made from wound strips of cloth. In the 1830's Charles Goodyear started to work on techniques to make a stable rubber compound. After many years of experimentation, finally in the 1850's, Goodyear discovered the way to vulcanise rubber to maintain its rigidity and elasticity. This process made rubber waterproof and winter-proof and after some more tweaks production of bouncy, hollow rubber balls could begin.