



Woodley Flier Gutter Golf Ball

£580



REF: 30885

Diameter: 4.3 cm (1.7")

Description

Antique Gutter Golf Ball, 'Woodley Flier'.

A very nice example of a 'Woodley Flier' gutta-percha golf ball with moulded mesh pattern. The gutter golf ball is manufactured by The Hyde Imperial Rubber Company of Woodley in Cheshire. The ball name 'Woodley Flier' in inverted lettering on a circular band on both poles of the ball with the DWT number (27 ½) within the center of the band. The DWT number on old gutter golf balls refers to pennyweights (dwt), a unit of weight from the apothecaries' system. In the 19th century, golf balls-particularly gutta-percha ("gutter") balls-were sometimes marked or described by their weight in dwt, a standard gutter ball often weighed around 26-28 dwt (? 40-44 grams). Since consistency of size and weight was a big issue before standardisation, these markings helped golfers know what they were getting.

The ball is approximately 4.3 cm in diameter.

The Hyde Imperial Rubber Company was one of the most active gutter ball companies and they supplied large quantities of gutta-percha rod to British gutter ball makers. The gutta came in long rods measuring between 1 and 2 inches in diameter.

The gutter golf ball replaced the featherie gutter ball because of its cost effectiveness, as a gutter could be rolled in a matter of minutes, and slowly the game of golf became affordable to the masses. In the 1860's Robert Forgan, the St Andrews club and ball maker, was said to have sold the first gutter golf ball with a surface pattern.

To make a gutter golf ball first the gutta-percha was heated and loosely rolled into a ball shape. The ball was then put into the mould and then placed into a press. The press would imprint the pattern onto the ball and the excess would squeeze out of the sides. The seams were then trimmed when cool, leaving a hard and non-brittle "Gutter" gutter ball. The durability of the gutta along with its lower costs and better play rejuvenated the game of golf.

Gutta-percha is the evaporated latex produced from a tree, mostly found in Malaysia.