



Bobby Jones Foundation

Sea Island welcomes the 2024 Bobby Jones Classic to celebrate one of golf's most honored legacies. By Dale Leatherman



On September 8-9, 2024, Sea Island will host the Bobby Jones Classic, a tournament created in the legend's honor by the Bobby Jones Chiari & Syringomyelia Foundation, which funds research for brain and spinal disorders.

When the late, great golfer Robert Tyre "Bobby" Jones, Jr. was photographed on August 1, 1930, teeing off on the Seaside Course at Sea Island, he was about to set a course record of 67 that stood for 28 years. At the time, he was only 28 years old but had already created an astounding legacy in the sport.

Earlier that same year, the young player had won the British Amateur Championship on the Old Course at St. Andrews, Scotland, followed by victory in the British Open Championship at England's Royal Liverpool Golf Club. Returning to the U.S., he won the U.S. Open at the Interlachen Country Club in Minnesota and went on to win the U.S. Amateur Championship at Merion Golf Club in Pennsylvania. In doing so, he became the only golfer to complete the (pre-Masters) Grand Slam of all four major championships in one year.

Bobby Jones is the only winner of Golf's Grand Slam in 1930 (left), and Bobby won his first of five American Amateur Golf Championships at Inwood New York in 1923 (right).

“It’s fitting that the 2024 Bobby Jones Classic is being played on the Seaside Course,” says resort historian Wheeler Bryan, Jr. “Nineteen days after his 1930 U.S. Open win, Jones teed it up on the new Seaside Course that was designed by Harry S. Colt and Charles Alison. Later, he sent a note to resort founder Howard Coffin saying that Seaside was ‘one of the very best nine holes that I have ever seen.’”

Since 2012, the Classic has been held each spring at the East Lake Golf Club. “It was Jones’ home club,” says Dorothy Poppe, Executive Director of the Bobby Jones Chiari & Syringomyelia Foundation. “Now, we’re excited to have the tournament at Sea Island, where he spent time relaxing in 1930, the year of his incredible Grand Slam.”

Though he retired at an age when many top golfers are just hitting their stride, he’d had a long career. Jones was a child prodigy, winning his first children’s tournament at age six. He qualified for his first U.S. Open in 1920, when he was 18. Three years later, he tallied the first of his four U.S. Open wins. Between 1923 and 1930 he won a total of 13 majors, including five U.S. Amateurs, three British Opens and one British Amateur.

In August 1948, he played his last round of golf at East Lake, citing health reasons for his withdrawal from the sport. He had begun to have severe neck pain, which was ultimately diagnosed as syringomyelia, a debilitating and incurable degenerative spinal disease.

Sportswriter Herbert Warren Wind wrote this of Jones: “As a young man, he was able to stand up to just about the best that life can offer, which is not easy. And later he stood up with equal grace to just about the worst.”

“The Bobby Jones Chiari & Syringomyelia Foundation is proud to carry the name and legacy of Bobby Jones,” says Poppe. “We are making great strides in the medical world to help more than 3,000,000 families in the U.S. alone find earlier diagnoses, improved treatments, and better outcomes.

“The Foundation is pleased to have the Bobby Jones Classic at Sea Island,” she continued. “The resort is all about quality and family, a perfect setting for the Classic, which is open to individuals, families and foursomes. The event generates awareness of Chiari malformation (CM), syringomyelia (SM) and related disorders while raising impactful research dollars to improve diagnoses and treatments, leading to a cure.”

The Bobby Jones Classic at Sea Island begins on Sunday, September 8, 2024, with a low country boil on Rainbow Island. Monday is devoted to tournament play on the Seaside Course, followed by awards, dinner and a program by the Bobby Jones CSF Foundation in the resort Trophy Room. Additional details are available online at bobbyjonesclassic.com.



Bobby Jones teeing off at Sea Island Golf Club.