

# Charlotte “Lottie” Dod

by Jeroen Heijmans

Although “only” a silver medallist at the Olympics, Lottie Dod is one of the most versatile athletes among history’s Olympians, together with greats as Jim Thorpe and Babe Zaharias–Didrikson. Apart from her Olympic medal Dod’s record boasts five Wimbledon titles, a national golf title, two caps as a field hockey player.



## Tennis prodigy

Dod, the “Little Wonder”, won her first tennis tournaments at age 13 and won Wimbledon for the first time in 1887. At 15 years, she is still the youngest player to have won the women’s singles at Wimbledon.

After retaining her title in 1888, Dod was mostly absent in the tennis circuit for two years, but came back strongly to win three consecutive Wimbledon titles, the first woman to do so. Dod, who had beaten Blanche Hillyard–Bingley in all her Wimbledon finals, quit tennis after her 1893 title.

## Golf, hockey and more

But Dod went on to compete in many other sports. During two winter stays in St. Moritz she practised figure skating, curling, tobogganing and mountaineering.

She also became the star player and captain of a women’s field hockey team she had helped founding. She was selected for the English national team, and played two matches, both against Ireland, in 1899 and 1900. In the latter match, she scored both English goals in the 2–1 win. She lost interest in the game after the death of her mother in the summer of 1901.

Lottie had played golf since she was 15, and in 1894 she began competing in the National Championships. She reached the semi-finals of those matchplay tournaments twice (1898, 1900). In the 1904 tournament, after not playing golf for two years, she won the final in an exciting last-hole decision.

## Olympic silver

In 1905, Dod and her brothers had started to take up archery, and began competing for the Welford Park Archers. She reached a sub-top level in national competition, and was allowed to shoot at the London Olympics. In an all-British field, she led the competition after the first day, while her brother was in the same position in the men’s event. William “Willy” Dod held on to win the gold medal, but Lottie dropped a place, leaving the Olympic title to Queenie Newall.

The disbandment of her archery club in 1911 meant the end of Dod’s sports career.

She passed away while listening to radio broadcasts of Wimbledon in her nursing home at age 88.

## Further Reading

- Jeffrey Pearson: Lottie Dod – Champion of Champions – Story of an Athlete. Wirral, 1988: Countywise Limited. ISBN 0–907768–26–1

### Biographical information

Charlotte “Lottie” Dod  
\* 24 September 1871  
Bebington, Cheshire (GBR)  
† 27 June 1960  
Sway, Hampshire (GBR)

### Olympic results

1908

Archery, Double National  
Round: silver medal