

What Happened In Golf In 1917-18?

GOLFDOM presents recollections of pros, managers and greenkeepers active in golf during World War I, who point out policies that may be most useful during present crisis

Pros Recall War-Time Golf

Tom Boyd, Dyker Beach GC, Brooklyn, N. Y., recounts his 1917-18 experiences—

DURING the earlier few months of the first World War, play fell off. But after the public was sold—and sold itself—on the idea that keeping fit was part of the job of winning the war, play was resumed on possibly a greater schedule than previously.

In those days there was very little play by shop and office workers, but the business executive class which was playing golf had heavy duties and had just as tough a time fitting needed recreation into their programs as men will have in this war.

I recall that no small part of the experienced pro's job in those days was in impressing many members that unless these men kept getting enough golf to keep themselves in good physical condition they would risk cracking under the war-time strain and be no good to the nation or to themselves.

That was a serious and well done selling job by pros who maintained close and sincerely interested watch over their members and saw men who neglected balanced living suffer physically, mentally and financially.

The majority of clubs at that time waived dues of members who were in the armed forces. Numerous clubs allowed service men to play the course free. That was less of a problem than it will be this year because of the far fewer number of golfers in 1917 and 1918.

Red Cross and other service benefits were played frequently at clubs. Admission fees and bidding for such clubs or balls as the players wanted to offer, and for the jobs of caddying for the players, raised considerable amounts.

The professionals then raised a large amount in exhibition matches. We had international teams. Jock Hutchison and Bob Macdonald were a Scotch team, Pat Doyle and I an Irish team, and there was a French team and various other teams of different nationalities. Pat and I played mid-week matches for the Sun Tobacco Fund which sent smokes to service men abroad.

Women at the golf clubs were exceptionally busy in war work. They were knitting, promoting every sort of a soldier, sailor, and marine, and war-time relief organization affair, and on just as busy schedules as their husbands.

This time it's my observation that the golf field has to do a quick and well-organized job of selling itself as a positive force in getting the nation fit for fighting on the battleline and in production and management jobs on the home front. This selling must be done to the people and to the government.

It is no time for quitters in the golf business. Golf businessmen who've got brains and guts and confidence in the American future will keep aggressive and resourceful in adjusting themselves to war-time conditions and in adding to the strength and spirit of the nation.

The showdown revealing who's strong and smart enough to deserve American freedom now is on in golf, as well as in all other phases of American social and business life.

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FRED Haas, pro at Metairie GC, New Orleans, and one of the nation's stand-out pro business authorities views the prospects of pro department policies and operations in war-time:

"First of all, I think professionals

should carry as large an inventory as they can finance because naturally there is going to be difficulty getting merchandise, and at the worst, prices will be more on the increase than on the decrease.

"Next, I think that every pro organization must eliminate the small leaks and become accustomed to operating on as small an overhead expense as possible. Third, I think pros should engage in a propaganda campaign calling the public's attention to the fact that a moderate plan of outdoor physical recreation is more necessary now than ever, and in this plan, of course, golf will automatically take its well-earned place.

"As for the effect which the war conditions will have on the golf business, this will largely depend upon the type of golfing plant at which the pro is engaged. The very exclusive private club will continue, although it will probably experience a reduction of play. The private club, which has as its members persons who earn between \$5,000 and \$15,000 a year, will find it much tougher going, because of the greater taxation which demands a curtailment of expense and, therefore, a certain amount of these members will do their golfing at semi-public or public courses where they are only subject to a fee each time that they play. In the course of this change no doubt some will be lost to the game of golf at least temporarily. The public fee courses and municipal courses ought to do a nice business and should get a lot of new players, both from the retrenching private club members as well as from workmen who have experienced a substantial increase in earnings under the existing conditions. Consequently, the only net loss which golf will experience is men in the army.

"My expressions are based on previous experiences to which I would add that conditions at this stage do not seem to promise as much profiteering out of war by a certain class as was the case during the last war.

"Immediate curtailment of expenses on part of the private clubs as well as private club pros seems to me both essential and unavoidable. On the other hand, I believe that practice fairways will have good business, and probably in some instances there may be a revival of the old putt-putt courses.

"From a standpoint of course maintenance, my recommendation would be to commence an immediate curtailment of expenditures so as to let the membership

become gradually used to a somewhat poorer condition of grooming. This of course necessitates a careful checking over of the existing standards, which each club may have and it must be borne in mind that such curtailment should not destroy fundamental conditions of soundness of existing grass growth.

"I am in favor of retrenchments, which I feel that if made immediately, will probably enable many clubs to live through the period of decreased income, which, in my opinion, is immediately in front of them.

"In order to maintain the good will of the people at large, I think that all golf tournaments should contribute a portion of their receipts to the Red Cross and other war-help organizations.

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George Sargent, pro at East Lake CC, Atlanta, Ga., and a former president of the PGA, advocates an offensive spirit by golf clubs to make clear their valid point that golf is the ideal all-age sport for relaxation and keeping fit. George writes:

"This is no time for golf to go on the defensive; but rather should take an aggressive attitude. If there ever was a time in the history of the United States when it is essential for one and all to keep themselves physically and mentally fit, it is from now on. If golf, as it has been played through the centuries, is what has been claimed for it—that of being a top notch physical exercise and an unsurpassed mental relaxor—and I venture to say there are few dissenters to that statement, then surely the time is here when it is needed as never before.

"Our golf courses are a going concern, ready and waiting to do their part in the tough times that may be ahead. The U. S. has a job to do that will require the best from all of us; but let's remember: we can work harder, better, and longer if we get a regular amount of play and relaxation. Our experience in the last war; and the experience of the British in both wars, teaches us that sports, of which golf played and is playing a splendid part, is a very distinct help in carrying the war burden."

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John R. Inglis, pres., Met. PGA section, and well known veteran pro at Fairview CC, Elmsford, N. Y., says:

"During 1917-18 golf did not deteriorate very much. The clubs, of course, operated with 10 to 12% less members, and the



Harry J. Fawcett, pres. CMAA, made a 5-week 6046-mile swing by car and train to Club Managers' Assn. chapters, and to clubs from Chicago to the West Coast, returning through the southwest. At Washington AC, Seattle, Mr. and Mrs. Fawcett were entertained by the Washington State Federation of Fraternal, Patriotic, City and Country Clubs. Left to Right: Mrs. Earl B. Hunt, Harry J. Fawcett, Mrs. Harry J. Fawcett, Earl B. Hunt, pres., Washington State Federation FPCC Clubs.

play was not very heavy. However, on Sundays and holidays the courses were well patronized, and only the week days showed a decline in the number of players. Women, especially, were very much interested in war work such as Red Cross, etc.

"Most clubs did not hold their usual club championships and large tournaments, but continued to keep their members interested by holding local club events throughout the playing season. The pro's business, because of these restrictions, was about 30% off. There was no shortage of clubs, balls or accessories. Many events and exhibitions were held for Red Cross benefit.

"We all know the game has made great strides and has many times the number

of players than in 1918. Consequently I feel that while many of our young men have been and will be called to the colors and while golf clubs will again be obliged to operate with smaller memberships, I do not anticipate there will be any drastic change. Most golfers play not only because they love the game, but because they realize that golf is the best exercise there is for one's health.

"Taxes will be much higher than during the last war, and many members will likely resign, but the majority of these will continue playing even if not at a private club. The Met section will do all it can to stimulate interest, and for the Red Cross and for defense. It is now planning one-day events for the new season."

What Managers Say

John W. Ingleson, manager of Oakland Hills CC (Detroit district), where the 1924 and 1937 National Opens were held and where house, grounds and pro department operations mark the club as one of the country's foremost, comments:

"During World War I, I was managing the Manitoba Club (City Club) of Winnipeg, Canada. Canada at that time gave everything she had in men and materials to further the cause, and, in proportion to her population, had as many casualties as England herself in the war. I merely mention this because as I think back the high standard of service of this club was held throughout the four years the same as in peace time. White gloves and all

the niceties were in use for private parties. There was a scarcity of Irish linens and English china and we were unable to get the pure Costa Rica coffee which the club always used. Sugar, of course, was rationed but not so that it was noticeable. We did lose all the British servants within the draft age but at no time did we suffer in this connection.

"In the spring of 1918, I visited a number of high class city clubs in Chicago and was amazed to find some of the very best using cotton table cloths and compartment plates and the waiters were serving, on private luncheons, probably 15 to 20 people. It was then I realized that when the United States did something they

did it very earnestly and thoroughly and I am now wondering to what extent this thoroughness will affect the club world now.

"In Detroit, the transition from the motor industry to defense program is now in process. This, I think, will level itself off in about 6 months. I believe that by that time adjustments will be made without a great deal of hardship but in the meantime I am afraid that many of the members will have cold feet and probably will cross bridges before they reach them. In this case, we can expect resignations. However, with all the billions being spent by the government it must necessarily create economic good times. The average age of our members is approximately 46 years. Men at this age would not be affected with duties that will prevent them from getting necessary relaxation and physical exercise.

"In view of the increased cost of replacements—food and labor—it would seem that a decrease in the annual dues would not be justified. I do, however, believe that to encourage membership replacements, the entrance fees should be reduced to the lowest possible amount, according to the individual club."

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Charles R. Oremus of Buffalo, club manager whose experience includes close association with industrial enterprises, opines:

"We should write and talk about sports, especially golf, as a means of keeping "John Q" in better physical condition to perform the various duties he will be called upon to do in the emergency.

"Curtaiment of sports events I believe will be confined more or less to the Coastal cities, especially along the Pacific and California coast.

"Sports must remain a vital part of our national conditioning program, more for the player than spectator. From now on the spectator must of necessity receive minor consideration because of the possible danger where large assemblies of sport-loving fans are gathered.

"With the possibility of big league baseball being curtailed, especially the night games, the sporting public would have more time to play. As golf does not require the assembly of large groups of people in a confined area it becomes the one game left for the sport loving public to play.

"Of course the 7-day work week is going to hurt golf to some extent but on the

other hand if a 7-day work week is put on a shift basis with one day off in 7 and shifts alternating every week or so, I believe the game would not suffer but would benefit by such a work program.

"As far as the private clubs are concerned I believe that the taxes are going to hurt them to some extent and benefit the public courses.

"I have recently talked to a few friends of mine who are members of private clubs and have been for many years, but who may resign from membership. I know these fellows are not going to give up their golf, so the public courses will get them.

"I don't believe that the increased cost of bags, clubs and balls will hurt, nor the discontinuance of the 25c ball. The golfing public is earning more money than ever before and will be willing to pay this increased cost.

"If I were the manager or president of a private golf club today, I would try to sell the board of directors on the idea of reducing the dues by the amount of the tax. This, I believe, would hold a lot of good members who otherwise might resign, and would generally raise the morale of the whole membership. The loss in revenue from this reduction in dues could be made up by promoting a membership campaign for additional members. Dropping initiation fees, if any, might be necessary too.

"Resignations due to members going into service may be a problem to some clubs but this loss could be made up by active campaigning for new members.

"Many golf clubs are located in the center of war producing industries and could well afford to do a little advertising for new members from this source.

"We who are interested in this game of golf and make a business out of it should get together and adopt the policy, 'Carry on with golf as long as it helps and doesn't interfere with business at hand.'"

* * *

Frank Brunner, manager, Flossmoor CC (Chicago district), recalls experiences in club operation during the first World War, in considering what policies and practices may be most useful this time.

Frank then was manager of the South Shore CC (which had opened on New Year's Eve, 1916, its huge clubhouse on the lake front well within the city limits of Chicago.)

He sees as the big difference in club operating in the two periods the matter of

taxes. Taxes during the first World War were light, on clubs and members, compared to the present rate. The \$15,000 a year men who probably constitute the major spending class of the better metropolitan district clubs will have more than \$2500 in federal income tax to pay. That's going to bite.

However, Brunner believes that the clubs can meet the critical situation by eliminating the frills while continuing to maintain good service distinguished by genius in simplicity. A considerable part of the club battle will be conducted before the season opens by exercise of managerial ingenuity in working out a strict war-time budget.

Frank is of the opinion that the American temperament is resilient and philosophical and that members will accept in cheerful resignation emergency service standards and prices at clubs, being disposed to regard their own inconveniences and troubles mercifully light compared with those of the lads in fighting service.

Service lectures and exhibitions were frequent at the club. Frank recalls the machine gun dismantling and assembly exhibitions at the club as being among the highlights of military demonstrations having a keen interest and effect among club members. He is of the opinion that staging of such exhibitions of modern war equipment at country clubs will spur civilian spirit and identify the clubs as centers of community cooperation and interest in civilian war-time activities.

Brunner says he is confident the pattern of country club activities in this war will be the same as the previous war, so far as the women members are concerned. They are great organizers and workers in effectively associating the club with valuable war-time effort, and Frank urges that club planning for war-time carefully consider the women by counting them in from preliminary planning stages all the way through.

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Greenkeepers' Opinion

THE following two reports from outstanding veteran greenkeepers John Anderson of the Essex County CC, West Orange, N. J., and Leo J. Feser, Woodhill CC, Wayzata, Minn., record these men's astute opinions on how golf and war will mix. Anderson, leading off, says:

It is true that conditions as they have become since the attack on this country by Japan places a great responsibility on

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Constituents, Elements, and Growth Producing Substances

An article appeared under the above title, in the Analytical Edition of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry, Vol. II, pp. 281-283, May 15, 1939. The authors, C. J. Rehling and E. Truog, reported some results of research conducted at the Soils Department, University of Wisconsin. A fellowship grant by the Sewerage Commission sponsored the project.

A composite sample, collected over the period 1931-1937 and analyzed by them, contained these amounts of basic fertilizer elements: Nitrogen 6.04 percent, total phosphoric acid 3.18 percent, and total potash 0.81 percent. A total of twenty-three different elements were detected in quantities sufficient to be determined quantitatively. (Complete analysis gladly furnished on request).

In this connection, the authors state, "Although nitrogen and phosphoric acid make up this chief portion of the plant nutrients, the appreciable amounts of other nutrient elements, including the minor ones, may well be of considerable importance in certain cases. The high solubility of the minor elements in weak solvents indicates a high degree of availability."

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emergency is so much more acute, they have to start all over again.

We, ourselves, had decided that we were pretty sure just how much labor would be available next season and had contacted a few college students who would become available when school closed for the summer, but as the matter now stands even they might be called upon to serve, thus that source of supply might be cut off.

However, I believe there will still be a limited amount of labor to be had; there are many over-age men who will be glad of the chance to help out, especially on golf course work which is a healthy, outdoor life. It is surely going to be a hard, strenuous job and will tax the superintendents' ingenuity to cope with these problems in an effort to make golf available to the general public, and the members of private clubs. But the men who carried on during the depression years when many budgets were cut by 50%, will carry on now in this greater emergency.

Golfers will be called upon to adjust themselves to war-time conditions, and many courses will not be manicured into the slick condition that they have been up to this time, but I have no doubt they will be playable and will constitute a great source of recreation and nerve soothing centers for the great army of defense and war producing men and women.

It has been suggested that owing to priority rulings and the consequent stoppage of manufacture except for war, many workers would be thrown out of work and thus become available for our type of work. I doubt this very much, especially in this section. Up until now new plants are going into operation much faster than old ones which cannot be readily adjusted to war work, and which are going out.

Only the most pessimistic pessimist will contend that no good can come from war. Much as we hate it, much as it costs in items more valuable than dollars, destructive as we know it to be, it does discipline

many of us who are to endeavor to keep the game of golf at the disposal of those who are bound to demand recreation and respite from their heavy war-time duties.

As the situation stood before and up to this time, it was clear that golf clubs and maintenance men were all set to function almost normally; they had been studying the labor and material situation for months and had made preparations in both directions; that is, they had surveyed the available labor for next season, and where the supply was not enough they had made up the deficiency by bringing into use more labor saving machines until the problem was pretty well in hand. Now that the

New Jersey GSA 1942 officers, elected at the December, 1941 meeting held at Twin Brooks CC, Plainfield, N. J. are: (left to right), Carlton E. Treat, 3 year director, Montclair GC; Charles Jensen, second vice president, Manasquan River CC; Aleck H. Reid, president, Twin Brooks CC; Charles Smith, first vice president, Harkers Hollow GC; Arthur J. Burton, treasurer, Mountain Ridge CC; Henry T. Islieb, financial secy., Spring Brook CC. Charles Laing, secretary, was reelected but was not present when photo was taken.

Kent Bradley Photo.



us to the hard facts of life. When the shouting and the tumult dies—in addition to the humble and the contrite heart, we will remember for a time at least that a clean mind in a healthy body is something to be cherished. If the voluntary discipline afforded by golf and other forms of athletic endeavor have enabled us to accept war discipline as we have accepted it, we have no great cause to worry about the future of these sports. If we have to accept war discipline, which we must, we can anticipate the milder forms of discipline which will follow.

Feser says:

It is obvious that golfing equipment is going to cost more than it did in the past. Steel and rubber are important golf materials. Mars will probably stymie more than a few golf fans when he puts his demands for these materials squarely in front of the cup.

A lot of the polish is coming off the maintenance standards of the past few years. Higher labor and material costs to be met by fewer club members with tax-dented pocketbooks means some belt-tightening in the maintenance department. Keeping the rough cut so those costly rubber pills won't get lost is going to be more important than watering fairways or cutting greens every day.

Of course we are going to keep golf. It may be abbreviated for the duration, but it is going to be there to help those fortunate enough to have this way of keeping fit for defense. National health is as important as national morale; it is up to us to provide facilities for this recreation, and do it with a degree of balance and efficiency equal to that required in military tactics.

717 Schools Participate in 1941 Scholastic Tournaments

A Complete report on the second annual Scholastic Golf Tournaments, which are conducted for both boy and girl students, and sponsored by Scholastic Magazine and Scholastic Coach, shows that 717 schools, an increase of 41% over the year previous, entered the 1941 tournaments. Total number of competitors in all final tournaments (not including preliminary eliminations) was 29,696.

Of the schools taking part in the tournaments, 97.4% report that interest and participation in golf is growing among the students. 51.3% report that they have taken advantage of instructional assist-



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ance from their local pro.

Even greater interest and participation for the third annual Scholastic Golf Tournaments is expected by G. H. McCracken, publisher, who has announced that special feature articles on golf will appear in both Scholastic Coach and Scholastic Magazine this winter and spring.

1942 officers of the Connecticut Assn. of Golf Course Supts. were chosen at the annual meeting held at the Farmington CC Monday, November 3, where 50 members and guests had dinner and heard a speaking program that included Miss J. G. Fiske of Rutgers University, and F. M. Morgan, Conn. Agricultural Experimental station. Newly elected officers are:

Pres., W. S. Lindsay, Wampanoag CC, W. Hartford; vice-pres., T. Nocker, Hob Nob Hill CC, Salisbury; secy-treas., Charles Traverse, Mill River CC, Stratford; asst. secy-treas., A. B. Longo, Woodbridge (Conn.) CC; board of directors: G. B. Moquin, Manchester (Conn.) CC; E. J. Casey, Wykagyl CC, New Rochelle, N. Y. December meeting of the organization was held December 8 at the Mill River CC, where Charles Traverse acted as host.