



Gallery of company employees follow finalists from a field of 40 in the annual championship at the Fuller Brush Co. par-3 course.

Short Course Popular With Fuller Brush Employees

By GEOFFREY S. CORNISH

WITH a half hour to an hour required to play a round, a short 9- or 18-hole layout with holes averaging 30 yards or more depending upon space has much to recommend it as an employee recreation facility around industrial sites, large office buildings and factories.

"The idea that very short 9-hole courses are without interest is an erroneous one," wrote George C. Thomas in "Golf Architecture in America." "It is possible to make a very short 9-hole approach and pitch course, where the holes will average around 30 yards, all of which requires most skillful playing to secure the average par of 3, and I know of several layouts of this character in crowded districts, which are very interesting and attractive. It would seem that such short courses could be easily installed at many clubs, at hotels and even for private grounds, and give the utmost pleasure, as well as fine practice for the short game."

Since Thomas made these observations in 1927 a number of short 9's and 18's have sprung up on industrial sites. An outstanding example of such a layout is the Fuller Brush Co. course at Fuller Park, Hartford, Conn. Opened in the late summer of 1941,

the Fuller Golf Club built on about 7 acres has become an important feature in the company's recreational set-up.

"It is my opinion that the golf course is the most popular recreational facility we offer our employees," says Thomas F. Brennan, Sports Director of the well-known brush company. "Altogether we have developed 13 acres for various sports at Fuller Park adjoining our plant and offices with the golf club occupying part of this acreage."

This 9-hole short course has yardages from 1 to 9 as follows: 64, 81, 67, 82, 94, 60, 62, 86, 103 for a total of 699 yards. All holes are par 3 for men, while for ladies 3, 4, and 5 pars are provided on the score card.

Averages 70 Rounds Daily

"An average of 70 rounds of golf is played daily on the course from spring opening until fall closing," says Brennan. "We run the normal tournaments that are popular at any country club. We have an annual club championship for men and one for women. About 40 enter the men's competition yearly and 15 to 20 are in the girls division of play. Spectator interest runs very high in these matches. Our big favorite, however, is the Hole-in-one contest usu-

ally scheduled in the fall which attracts more than 200 entries each year. With individual prizes for both men and women, all employees show tremendous interest in this contest."

It is of interest and possible significance to note that the Fuller Industrial Golf team won the Greater Hartford Industrial league championship in 1953, and then went on to win the New England Industrial championship. The short course and other recreational facilities are run by employees with organization and rules similar to a country club. To the Fuller Club members may bring visitors as guests, subject to regulations by the House committee. Otherwise play is restricted to employees.

The course, laid out on gently rolling, lightly wooded land has been designed to provide interest for the golfer and beginner and because it can all be mowed with large power mowers its maintenance is an economical operation. Not only has it preserved the original beauty of the grounds but it has added to their attractiveness.

Industrial Grounds Course Sites

While the Fuller course occupies around 7 acres, flat and rolling lawns of two acres and larger on industrial sites have been converted inexpensively into interesting short golf courses of this type with no sacrifice in the beauty of the lawn as part of the landscape. Although layouts built on extensive level lawns with flat greens and no hazards afford considerable interest, a superior course not requiring a great amount of soil moving and additional expense is made by raising many of the greens above the general lawn level, constructing a few shallow sand traps and gentle mounds, and possibly one or two ponds. To call for greater skill in putting, several of the greens could be rolling.



There always are Fuller Brush employees watching the shots of the more than 200 contestants in the annual hole-in-one competition.

A course designed in this fashion provides interest to all with no abatement in interest as the season progresses. Furthermore, with close clipped elevated greens contrasting with longer cut fairways, with colored flags, white sand traps, balanced plantings of shrubs, perennials and annuals the whole feature can be amazingly beautiful.

When lawns are converted for this purpose the existing water system can often be utilized with only a few alterations. Equipment is already on hand for fairway mowing and if care is taken in construction the lawn turf is more often than not ideal for fairways. This leaves greens to build, their seeding or sodding, the excavation of traps, building of water hazards, if these are included, and purchase of one or two greens mowers, flags, hole cups and tee mats. Once the course is built the existing grounds crew can usually maintain it as is the case with the Fuller course. When technical advice on turf maintenance is needed an arrangement can probably be made with a local golf course superintendent to make periodic visits of inspection. In this regard experience has shown that ideal putting conditions are just as important in short golf as in the longer game.

The question of a clubhouse may arise. While the Fuller Club has an attractive house, more than one course of this type has been opened for play without anything in the clubhouse line at all. In later years this may be added, if it is desired.

In the last few years many short 9- and 18-hole courses floodlit for night play and operated as commercial ventures have been built in various parts of the nation and are proving to be assets to the communities in which they are located. Not only are they of interest to golfers but they are affording many newcomers an opportunity to learn the game and are providing many hours of wholesome pleasure for an increasing number of people old and young.

With the trend toward decentralization of industry and the consequent locating of business houses and factories away from the centers of towns and cities, increasing interest is being shown in golf by company sports directors. Because there is not time at lunch hour or between shifts to participate in the longer game, nor always land and funds available for standard layouts, the inexpensive short course similar to the Fuller Golf Club on limited acreage deserves consideration by sports directors and committees planning recreation programs and facilities for employees.