

PITY THE POOR
golf orphan
 —PUT IN A PLAYGROUND!

By JACK FULTON, Jr.



This is part of the playground at the Medinah Country club in the Chicago district. It is a highly popular feature of the club, with both the children and the members.

UP to a very few years ago, one of the standard butts of humor claimed by the cartoonist, the jokester and the raconteur was the patient, neglected wife of the rabid golf "nut." She was known as the "golf widow," and many and varied were the abuses she was reputed to meet. But within the past few years the golf widow has passed out of the picture, and humorous writers have been forced to look elsewhere for their humorous subjects. There are no golf widows any more; they are all out playing on the same course as their husbands.

As a natural result of woman's increased interest in golf, a new "injured party" has taken her place, and although the humorous writers have not yet seized the new victim, they doubtless soon will. I refer

to the "golf orphan," the poor neglected child of golfing parents, left to shift for himself while Mother and Father go in quest of pars and birdies on the links.

Seriously, now that women have taken so strongly to the game, the problem of what to do with the children while the parents are both on the links has become one of major importance, and the club interested in luring its members to the club as frequently as possible, and thus increase its income, must make provision for taking care of the youngsters.

The need for supervision of the golf orphan is obvious. Left to shift for himself, a child, from the time he can barely totter around until he is 12 or 14, is a genius in his ability to get in the way. He invades the locker rooms, sings the

battle cry of childhood up and down the porches, plays noisy tag around the bridge tables, and regards the carpet-like greens immediately adjacent to the clubhouse as specially cultivated for him to dig into with his heels. These annoyances, in the eyes of the members, are, of course, not deliberate on the part of the children; they are the result of the perfectly normal enthusiasms of childhood, and cannot be changed.

To the club, therefore, interested in attracting parent-members to the grounds as often as possible, some way must be found to segregate the children away from the clubhouse and at the same time offer them sufficient attractions so they will be interested in accompanying their parents to the club grounds whenever the parents choose. The answer is—build a playground for the youngsters; establish a house rule that children must not play games except in the immediate vicinity of the playground, and employ, if possible, an attendant to keep them in hand.

All things considered, it is surprising more golf clubs have not established playgrounds. The peace of mind of the parents, the other members and the club management; the added assurance that the youngsters are safely supervised, and the very reasonable investment necessary to equip a playground and the small amount of land needed for the site knock out all arguments against its establishment.

The first item in a playground is the sand box, a lure that will keep children happy hour after hour. Construct a shallow box, about 10 ft. square with 12 to 15-in. sides. The reason for not putting down simply a frame around the pile is to keep the earth underneath from mixing with the sand and soiling it; clean sand leaves no grime on the youngsters' clothing, even after a protracted session of castle building, but if there is dirt in it, the kids will come out pretty messy. Locate in a shady corner of the play area.

Next in popularity to the sand pile are the slide, which can be purchased at reasonable cost and in various heights from 10 ft. to 16 ft., with chutes from 16 ft. to 30 ft. in length; see-saws, generally 14 ft. long, which may be purchased in groups of two, three or four mounted parallel on a single frame support; the "giant stride," consisting of an upright pole firmly fixed in a concrete base, with a pivot head, from which are suspended several ropes or chains with ladder handles; and lastly,

possibly the most important of the items in the whole playground, the swings, which need no description except to suggest that they be not higher than 12 ft.

Obviously the playground should be level; should be well drained, and turfed. There should be shade trees about. The grass will be worn away under the popular pieces of apparatus, but if the soil is a firm sandy loam, no reurfing is needed. If the underlying soil is a clay, however, it is advisable to tamp down cinders and top-dress with gravel.

Much of the playground apparatus can be built by the club at low cost, but all things taken into account, it is generally wiser to request recommendations, layouts, and bids from a number of firms specializing in playground equipment. Purchased items of equipment are more sturdily built, safer for the youngsters to use, and keep in order under abuse longer than locally constructed pieces.

Foremost Factors in Club Policies

TO summarize the most important factors in club development and operation: Comfort and convenience for the members;

- Harmonious Board of Directors;
- Complete and adequate budget system;
- Certified monthly audit;
- Capable club manager;
- Consideration of members' time;

Economy and efficiency-operation, the same as that of any million-dollar proposition, on a business basis;

Social activities arranged by the manager and hostess, under house chairman's directions;

To try and make the members feel at home and free to offer constructive suggestions, notwithstanding the fact that definite rules, regulations and policies are necessary to successful operation.—D. Howard Hawk, manager, California Country club.

SOIL which is not absolutely free of weeds should never be put on greens. Weeds must therefore not be allowed to go to seed on or near compost piles.