



This lake, on the property of Los Serranos C. C., Chino, Calif., not only solves the club's water problem, but serves many recreational purposes as well

## "More Than a Golf Club" Means Many Plant Problems

By ARTHUR LANGTON

**M**UCH MORE THAN an opportunity to play golf is offered by many California country clubs in the attempt to satisfy as many player wants as possible. The conditions which allow for and give rise to the demand for these extra features are directly traceable to the nature of the state itself. The natural wonders of California as dwelt upon at some length in the magazine advertisements actually do provide lakes for boating, fishing, swimming, and other aquatic sports; woods, hills, and dales to invite the installation of a string of saddle horses; and shrubby grasslands wherein shootable game delights to hide. Golf courses of the state have adopted these and other features until the clubs have incorporated well nigh every form of outdoor amusement. And the fact that these sporting features may be somewhat synthetic need not detract materially from their enjoyment by club members. The lakes in many cases may be, and probably

are, serving the dual role of reservoirs; the wooded hills and dales in all likelihood have been made so by dint of much transplanting and irrigation; and the game birds do have to be replenished at frequent intervals; but withal a purpose is served.

### Play Plants Are Extensive

Typical examples of the extra-amusement golf club may be cited at length. The Los Serranos C. C., a transformed rancho near Chino, presents a galaxy of amusements besides golf. A reservoir lake provides swimming, fishing, and boating, besides adding a scenic touch; horses enable the equestrian to scour the surrounding hills; tennis courts are there for those who wish to use them; and the location of a game farm in the vicinity of the club grounds suggests that some day hunting will be available. The Peter Pan C. C. at Big Bear Lake offers a similar list of sports in addition to skating, snowshoeing, and tobogan-



Los Serranos offers swimming, boating and fishing in addition to golf, thanks to the presence of the lake on its grounds

ning which altitude makes possible in the winter. The Midwick C. C. near Alhambra besides incorporating a fine golf course noted for its fairways is internationally famous for the quality of polo which is played there. Eric Pedley, sharp-shooting rider on America's championship team, claims Midwick as his home club and on its turf has locked sticks with the best players of several continents. Incidentally, southern California has become somewhat of a polo center and the game is becoming increasingly popular. This is of interest to greenkeepers only in that the upkeep of turf on a polo field offers a number of unique and interesting problems.

### Where Golf Alone Suffices

These clubs are only three shots at random but will serve as illustrations. There are other clubs offering all of the amusements named and some more besides. The presence of all these outside-the-pale attractions adds to the problems of golf course management and gives rise to the question of whether or not their presence is desirable. Logically it might sound that the course with the most attractions would be the most successful and popular, and conversely, the course with nothing but golf to offer would be the least played. But the actual situation gives no evidence of the truth in this line of reasoning. In fact, a cursory examination of the situation might convince the observer that the most successful courses were those which offered

nothing but unmitigated golf. However, this conclusion would be made without an understanding of all the circumstances involved.

It is true that the best-known courses in a given district in California, examining the southern part for instance, offer golf only. But these clubs are either in or adjacent to the metropolitan area of Los Angeles, and their membership represents the wealthier portion of the golfing public. The Los Angeles, Wilshire, Hillcrest, Riviera, and other private courses have practically nothing on their grounds not directly connected with golf. A tennis court and a swimming pool perhaps as a concession to wives and children, but little else.

The reason for this situation is that people who belong to such clubs have joined them for the sole purpose of playing golf and nothing else. For other sports entertainment they belong to beach or athletic clubs, have cottages by the sea and cabins in the mountains. This condition should not be surprising inasmuch as all wealthy metropolitans have a decided tendency towards specialization in all they do. They have specialists in human ailments work upon them when they are sick; they have several different cars for a variety of purposes; they visit one restaurant because it serves one kind of food and visit another because of some other specialty; and when they tire of one kind of wife or husband they go to Reno. The idea that they should go fishing at their golf clubs is as strange to them as the proposal that they should eat their beef steak a la mode.

But such is not the case in the wide areas composing the hinterland of Los Angeles where golf and other forms of amusement are less accessible to the less wealthy but sport-loving populace. The golf club must fill the place of a number of institutions which are available to the city man. Mr. John Orangegrower of the country while not being so affluent as Horace Gotrox in the city, still is comfortably well off and has as keen an appetite for the sports that the city man craves. Therefore, the golf club caters to his needs by being a combination athletic, social, and country club.

### Location Determines Facilities

A decision which must be made by all club managements is in determining whether their clubs will make an appeal to the people of the metropolitan or coun-

try districts. Ordinarily the location of the club in relation to a city will be an indication of the proper course to pursue, but there are clubs so situated that they rest on the borderline. These clubs must survey conditions carefully and make a determined appeal one way or the other. Experience in California has demonstrated that there can be no half way measures else the club that tries them is liable to find itself perched uncomfortably upon a fence, appealing to neither class.

In this state there are a number of clubs located 20 miles or more from a large center of population which have tried to make a city appeal. The fact that they have, in many cases, fine courses and clubhouses has been to no avail. The city residents have refused to drive out so far, and the local people have felt that the clubs were not made for such as they. One club in particular which was once said to have one of the best courses in California went bankrupt because it was a city club too far away from the city. At the present time the creditors are trying desperately to make an about face and get anybody to play who has a green fee. Whether or not they will be successful is doubtful because the club site was chosen for scenic purposes and is remote from even small towns or agricultural centers. Good advertising is their hope.

### Promoters Learn—With Sorrow

City golf clubs which attempt to make an appeal to the suburban rather than urban minded players are not as prevalent as the pseudo city clubs in remote country districts. This is largely due to the fact that property prices and taxes are prohibitive, limiting the clubs to as small an area as possible for the establishment of a golf course and leaving no ground to spare for other features.

Several years ago one such club was started. Hundreds of memberships were sold for a song; a championship course was planned; and an impressive clubhouse was started. But although this may be the home of democracy, no solid citizens with heavy bank accounts were attracted to membership to establish a sound credit basis. Today the ground on which the course was planned has reverted to its former state and the skeleton of the club house stands on the hill as a monument and a warning to those promoters unwary enough to try and establish one kind of a club in a region suited only to the other.

Management of the two types of courses presents different problems from at least the greenkeeper's standpoint, although the distinction is chiefly in intensity. Members of the city clubs demand that the slightest details on the course represent absolute perfection, that the tee benches be placed so many feet from the teeing ground proper, that the hand towels on the boxes be spotless, that the traps be perennially raked, that there be no unsightly hose left within sight during the day, and so on. They want nothing to detract from the business at hand which is golf. The suburban player, on the other hand, is not so fussy about details, but has not so much respect for the game and its traditions, being apt to cause the greenkeeper annoyance or embarrassment by his occasional unorthodox requests or actions. Players of this type taking time out to eat a picnic lunch or pick flowers are not unknown on the courses far removed from the maddening crowds.

Humorous stories to the contrary, the primary purpose of golf is for recreation and amusement and the best type of golf course is that which provides the player with the most enjoyment. Observation over a long period of time indicates that more amusement actually is obtained from the country course than from the city course. Whether or not this is due to the course, its surroundings, or the people who play it is problematical.

### Limited Term Club Protests Federal Tax Payment

**WILMETTE** (Ill.) G. C., organized on a 10-year membership plan, is contesting payment of the federal 10 per cent membership fee tax. Wilmette was one of the earlier clubs in which limited term memberships were sold by a company owning the course and clubhouse and its success had much to do with the recent popularity of the plan.

Payment of the taxes have been made under protest and now the club and the treasury department are going to a court battle to determine the legality of the limited-term membership fee and dues tax. Wilmette is represented by James H. Cartwright, of Winston, Strawn and Shaw, eminent attorneys of Chicago.