

# SWEAT INSTEAD OF RICHES

By EDWARD W. COCHRANE

**\$7,000 and Members' Labor  
Makes Rajah Club a Jewel**

**W**H<sup>O</sup> said golf is a rich man's game? Would you believe it if you should be informed that near the city of Independence, Kas., is a splendid 18-hole golf course, known as the Rajah Country club, the fairways of which were cut through one of the densest growths of trees, scrub oak and other underbrush that could be found in this entire southwest country, at a cost of \$7,000, \$4,500 of which was the cost of the 120 acres of land used? The course has a clubhouse, a professional's shop and a shelter house, all attractive and made of native stone.

It is almost impossible to believe that so much was accomplished by the business men of the town who wanted a golf course and did not have enough cash to hire one made, so they made it themselves. Recently Olin Dutra, National Open champion, and Jimmy Thompson, Open Australian champion, played the course and pronounced it one of the finest layouts they have seen, with the possibility, when it has grass greens and traps, of being one of the best tests of golf in this entire southwestern country.

## Needed the Recreation

The club had its origin on a hot August evening back in 1931. Business was bad. The business men of Independence had been suffering from the depression just as other business men in other towns had. Bill Gray, Ed Pugh and Delbert Brooks sat in the rear of Gray's clothing store in the Kansas town discussing the troubles, national and local. The depression was the cause of many caustic and emphatic remarks. In short, stock was very low for these men and others.

"What we need is more recreation," Brooks said, mopping his brow and moving over in front of the electric fan. "A guy should have a place where he can relax, play eighteen holes of golf, take a swim and then come home refreshed."

That chance statement led to the building of the Rajah Country club. Pugh and Gray lent interested ears to the remark and before the day was over the three of them had visited a hilly tract of wooded

This story Edward W. Cochrane, widely known, sports editor of the Kansas City (Mo.) Journal-Post, wrote originally for his paper.

The first story in *GOLFDOM'S* first issue was about a small town club that built a fine 9-hole course and clubhouse on an initial investment of \$3,700 and we got some criticism on the piece, being censured for promoting the idea that a golf club could be established for so little money.

Therefore, in different — and thriftier days, we are happy to pass the word from Ed Cochrane to golfers in smaller towns that they can have really beautiful and inviting golf clubs, like that at Independence, Kansas, if they want them badly enough.

land on the edge of town and made plans for the organization.

The unique feature of the club is the fact that every bit of the work has been done by the members. The 120 acres for the course was purchased. Gray, Delbert and Pugh then signed sixty charter members who paid \$25 each, and all agreed to put in eight hours' work apiece each week on the course.

The 120 acres were covered with huge trees, scrub oaks and other underbrush, but the members worked diligently to clear space for the fairways and rid the land of the unneeded trees. It was a tremendous task, but the doctors, lawyers and business men of the town stayed with it. They pulled 10,000 trees and stumps. Pugh and another member lost fingers during the work. They put in a total of 105,400 hours.

## First Nine in 1932

The men were divided into groups, with each body responsible for one part of the course. For instance, group No. 1 was responsible for fairways on the first, second and third holes and another body had charge of the building of the clubhouse, which was erected out of native stone taken from the grounds. The plan of Tom Manley, now professional at the Independence country club, was accepted as the best layout for the rugged and hilly land.

The first nine was completed in the spring of 1932 and work started soon afterward on the back side. With the completion of the 18 holes in 1933 the dream

of those three worried business men back in 1931 became a reality.

It is the only 18-hole layout in the community and the rolling fairways, rocky chasms and tree-lined fairways make it as sporty as any in the state.

#### Lake Being Built

A new 6-acre lake is being built and the clubhouse will have additions in the future. A shelter house and professional's quarters were constructed out of the native stone also, and the amazing thing of the whole project—the entire course and buildings have been built for \$7,000, and that includes the price of the 120 acres.

The layout is 6,166 yards long and has a par of 72.

Brooks, Gray, Pugh and other members of the club as well as the citizens of Independence are proud of the Rajah course. A new high in cooperative achievement was set by its builders.

"I am sure if we had realized what we would have had to do to build this golf course on such a tract of land we never would have undertaken it," said Ed Pugh with a smile. "But we've got it now, and we are proud of it. We did it with our own hands. It did us a lot of good physically, and every man feels that he has ten times the interest he would have had if he had paid for the work being done instead of doing it himself. It's our golf course."

They are not through yet. The clubhouse is so constructed that they can build on to it when they want to, and finally they will have a beautiful stone house that will be one of the show places of that country. They have a half mile of river front on the Elk river that supplies the water for their city and they can pipe water into a tower that will supply water for fairways and greens. That is their next step. They want 18 fine grass greens and then they want the Kansas State championship and even bigger tournaments. They are looking forward to the time when they can prove that they have the finest golf course in Kansas and then they are going to be able to say that it cost very little.

"It may be a rich man's game," said Bill Gray. "But there isn't a rich man in this club, and it didn't cost much, but we own it and we are going to keep right on playing golf on a fine course at very small expense. We have proved that golf can be a cheap and splendid amusement, worth ten times what it costs us on our \$7,000 payout."

### Iowa Greenkeepers Association Opens Season

**D**UE to unusually late season which held back work on golf courses, the season's opening meeting of the Iowa Greenkeepers Assn. was not held until May 15. The Des Moines G & CC was host to over thirty Iowa greenkeepers who were made welcome by the two Schacht brothers, Elmer and Robert, pros at the club and by William Keating, greenkeeping foreman.

Practically all of the visitors brought clubs and enjoyed playing the course which is constantly improving and getting in fine shape. The course is said to be the longest 18-hole course in the state.

Several interesting educational features were on the program. Keating is giving a convincing demonstration to the members and officials of his club on the value of various sorts of fairway fertilization systems. He has seven plots laid out in a careful manner and these show the relative values of various systems.

A large use of peat has been made in the construction of some of the new greens recently turned into play. Keating considers this to be a very valuable aid in maintaining a proper soil condition and contemplates the use of even larger quantities in the future. He also uses a quantity of fine gravel in the foundation soil of the green to help drainage. This gravel is obtained from a nearby creek bed and is preferred to sand.

A very convincing demonstration was given of the use of a small hammer mill for the preparation of compost for top-dressing. Material was brought immediately into fine condition for use in top-dressing.

### Amateurs In Paid Gallery Matches For Charity Only

**T**he USGA states its attitude regarding the appearance of amateur golfers in exhibition matches for which admission is charged, by reaffirming through its Amateur Status and Conduct committee:

An amateur golfer may take part in an exhibition match, for which admission is charged, provided that the net proceeds go to an organized charity. Professionals appearing in such a match may be paid appropriate amounts for their services, and the club may be reimbursed only to the extent of its actual expenses. The expenses of the club must be certified by an officer of the club.