



The rustic, log clubhouse of Riverside is finer in its fittings and furnishings and more appropriate to its setting than many a private club structure.

"PAY IF YOU CAN, BUT PLAY"

Bank holiday policy brought this course through tough years

THIS is a story of a man who has yet to play golf, but who built and successfully operates a layout declared to be one of the most attractive fee courses in the south. It is a story of a man who took the depression by the horns and, when fee golf courses from one end of the country to the other were struggling, started a new golf enterprise and made it an outstanding money-maker.

The man is W. D. Cammack, owner, operator and chief arbiter of the Riverside course at Little Rock, Ark.

Even the national bank holiday, in the spring of 1933, didn't trip him. He heard of President Roosevelt's proclamation calling for a national bank "holiday." He promptly issued a proclamation himself, announcing Riverside was open but was operating on a "holiday basis"; that is, that the golfers could play without green fees. "Pay if you can; if you can't pay, play anyway. I'd rather have you play than stay away," his proclamation said.

"For a while my invitation was accepted in the spirit in which it was intended and many of my friends passed through the gate, later requesting the privilege of signing tickets which I permitted with the assurance that subsequent payments would not be demanded," Mr. Cammack told GOLF'DOM. "I am happy to report that most of the tickets were redeemed."

Riverside is an 18-hole course, with excellent fairways, undulating grass greens, and plenty of hazards, natural and other-

wise. Five sporty water holes make the expert and the beginner watch his step.

Starts with Course Design That Interests

The course is not extremely long nor of difficult terrain. From the regular tees the yardage is 6,435, with a par of 72. Back tees give an extra yardage, bringing the total to 6,635.

Holes follow in desirable rotation. There are doglegs and long straight holes offering an opportunity to the long driver to do his stuff. On two of the water hazards, the water must be carried on the second or third shots, depending on the length of tee shots. The other water hazards bring the mashie, niblick, four or three iron clubs into play, from the tees.

Architecture of the course is such as to render a missed shot a total loss, but a good shot is well rewarded. The designer of the course took full advantage of Mother Nature's offerings and added his own ideas to present an unlimited variety of problems and shots for the aspiring golfer.

Cammack, a successful business man, had been operating rock crushers, gravel plants and various other enterprises when the tailspin of 1929 started. He found his usual activities folding up. But his nature is such that he couldn't stand still and see the depression go by without doing something about it.

Owning 220 acres of land lying between pineclad hills on the south and the Arkan-

sas river and abutting bluffs on the north, he decided the tract would make an ideal site for a golf course. It is so located that a five minute drive from the business section of the city brings the golfer to No. 1 tee. And from the other direction, it is not more than 10 minutes from a greater part of the residential section.

Cammack, for many years a member of the Little Rock CC, had tried to play golf "back in the good old days." He got around about eight holes when he gave up and he has never tried again. But that attitude was as a player only.

With the golf course idea in its infancy, he called on H. C. Hackbarth, veteran pro at the Little Rock CC. Hackbarth looked over the site. He saw wonderful possibilities. Word spread around that some person, not very well versed in the economic crisis at hand, was suggesting a new golf course. There were a few laughs, some of them from bankers cautiously approached, for there weren't funds in sight even for a temporary clubhouse.

But with Hackbarth furnishing the ideas for the construction, Cammack hitched up his suspenders and went to work. Labor wasn't hard to find, but money was, when construction started in April, 1932. To the wonderment of the natives, Little Rock was presented with a new golf course July 2, when play started.

An abandoned railroad depot served as a clubhouse, and was used for a year and a half.

Continues to Improve During Depression Years

"I enjoyed a good business the first year and well into 1933," said Cammack. "It took a lot of managing, though, and then came the bank holiday and general demoralization in 1933. The condition called for more managing, but we made it. Despite conditions, not a single day was lost in my program to continue improving the course and bringing it as near perfection as humanly possible." And that was the story of the course through the worst of the depression.

In the fall of 1933 Cammack called in a friend, W. M. VanValkenburgh, an architect, and plans were made for a real clubhouse, rustic in design and built almost entirely of logs. Open house was held in the first unit of the clubhouse January 1, 1934.

Cammack found his golf venture growing almost too fast for him to keep pace. It had outgrown the temporary club-

house and the first unit of the new one already was too cramped. "In the fall of 1934," said Cammack, "we started enlarging the clubhouse and one of the features was building of several small locker rooms, large enough to accommodate 10 lockers each, with private showers, toilets and lavatories. These were offered to congenial groups and they were snapped up in a hurry. In fact, all had been taken before the construction work had been completed. The idea was an innovation and was much appreciated. There are general locker rooms in addition."

"In building the additional locker rooms, instead of a ceiling and roof only, I decided to have an upstairs room." Cammack said. "A few more logs were cut and what happened? The Riverside patrons now have a dance hall with 2,000 feet of floor space!

"We have recently installed a kitchen and are prepared to serve golfers with food, and have adopted a leasing policy with reference to the entertainment room, together with the entire building, for private night parties."

The entrance room, which houses the pro-shop, is heated by a fireplace taking 4-ft. logs, and is a favorite place for golfers on murky days. The room has a vaulted ceiling 16 ft. high, with rustic finish in hand hewn beams and rafters. The fireplace is of field stone with hand wrought fixtures. This room opens into a refectory with the same kind of ceiling and beams. The ballroom upstairs has a rustic balcony and stairway.

The course is operated on a strictly fee basis. The week-day rate is 50 cents. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays the rate is 75 cents. On this basis the golfer can play 18 holes, or all day, if he desires.

The field in a tournament at the course last fall indicates its popularity. There were 11 flights, with 16 players in each flight.

THE laws of supply and demand have considerable influence on the price of club memberships. A better price can always be asked when a waiting list exists.

Realizing this, a Midwestern club which operated in the black last year with a roster of 237 active members has recently paved the way for an early waiting list and hence better prices by reducing the limit of memberships from 300 to 250. As soon as 13 more memberships are sold this spring, no more will be available until resignations occur.