

TOWN MERCHANTS GIVE PRIZES

Here are two accounts of how merchants support many golf events

THE value of tournaments as an interest builder in golf is unquestioned, but whenever a municipal course thinks of such a thing to get players stirred up in the grand old game, there's always the wail of "no funds." The municipality generally provides money for the upkeep of the course only; the rest of the matters can work themselves out as best they can. But along comes a letter from Ed Livingston telling what he has done at the Elmhurst Park Golf Club, a municipal layout in Sioux Falls, S. Dak., and Ed's way of working out a tournament plan looks pretty good as a means of giving municipal courses some sort of an extra added attraction. Says Ed of his plan:

"At Elmwood we have hit upon a plan which has worked out very well. At the start of the season I make personal calls on the various business firms in the city and solicit prizes for the tournament events. All prizes are placed in a trophy-case which is kept on display at the clubhouse the entire season. Each prize, with a courtesy card bearing the name of the donor, is displayed in the case.

"We run a handicap event each week-end and each event is named for the firm which has given the prize. The merchants have cooperated very readily, because, aside from the advertising value of the clubhouse display and the printed program, we have a story in the newspaper the day preceding the event calling attention to the special week-end tournament and mentioning the prizes as well as the donors. Then again, on the day following the event, there is another story in the paper announcing winners and again mentioning the prizes and the firm or firms contributing. The local paper and sports editor have helped to put over our program by giving much space to our events, both before and after each tournament.

"We find that in the first part of the season it is easy to keep up the interest in golf and that our play will be quite heavy. In the latter part of July and early in August there is a tendency for the play to lessen, so we have deliberately

concentrated our efforts to this time by increasing the number and the nature of the tournaments. Due to the numerous events with valuable prizes put on at this time we have sustained the interest right up to our closing time, which is usually around the first of November.

"We have tried to present a balanced tournament program by running the numerous handicap events so that each player, due to his handicap, is given an even chance. The better players are given their chance in the club championships and various flight tournaments which are played without handicaps. A team match with the Minnehaha CC has done a lot to advertise golf in this vicinity and has also brought about a most cordial relationship between the players of both clubs.

"A similar program for ladies has been worked out and is announced each week in the local papers and on the Bulletin Board. One day each week is designated as Ladies' Day and some interesting event with suitable prizes, is played. This Ladies' Day event has not only increased our play on this one particular day but has stimulated the interest among the lady golfers so that many more of them are playing each day of the week."

Sixty Merchants Cooperate in Orange, Texas, Tourney

THE important part a golf club can play in the life and growth of our smaller communities is clearly demonstrated by the highly successful Merchants' Golf Tournament held on the Sunset Grove CC course, Orange, Tex., last August. This was one of the most unusual and successful tourneys ever held in Texas. A similar tournament would

have great possibilities for other golf clubs as a builder of interest in the game, in the club, and as a revenue producer.

Harold Stephens, energetic pro-manager at Sunset Grove, sold the idea to the Orange merchants and the manner in which they responded is indicated by the entries of more than 60 firms, manufacturers, stores, etc. In speaking of the tournament Stephens says:

"Each firm paid a \$3.00 entry fee and selected a golfer to represent them or their product. The golfer immediately lost



Stevens (left) and committee secured this impressive pyramid of prizes for the event.

his identity, playing under the name of the business or product he represented. The merchants got the publicity out of the tournament, and the golfers got the fun of the competition. We had more entries than we could take care of, and many of the entries were from out of town concerns. Our local chamber of commerce, realizing the publicity possibilities to the town, sponsored the event." The success of the tournament has prompted the chamber of commerce to underwrite the event again this season.

Organizing Golf League

Stephens is now engaged in organizing a golf league composed of the Sunset Grove, Lake Charles, Port Arthur, Beaumont and Orange Country Clubs, designed to promote more golf interest in the communities and to strengthen the friendly relations between the clubs. Stephens' plan is for each club to be represented by more than just a few of their golfers, setting a minimum number in order to bring in most of the so-called average and dub players of each club, and the score for each club would be the average of all the scores turned in. A handicap event would be the climax of the season.



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