

"Decline of Golf" May Only Preview Game on Bigger Scale

A CLEVER editorial writer on the Chicago Daily News batted out a humorous piece under the alarming (to us) head "The Decline of Golf." The News is truly a great newspaper. Its publisher is Frank Knox, Republican vice-presidential candidate in 1936, so you may well suspect that it is not cordial toward the New Deal.

The News editorial read:

The grand old game of golf originated as a kind of solitaire-shinny. It was invented by dour and thrifty Scotch shepherds knocking pebbles around with their crooks to employ idle moments while tending their flocks.

The first signs of decadence appeared when twosomes and foursomes began to play, thereby making a certain amount of conversation an inevitable concomitant, and destroying the original idea of the game. Insidiously the social element intruded itself, until golf had degenerated into a gentleman's game and had become a symbol of the landed gentry and the leisure class. Then, by devious and ill-defined stages, golf established itself, like the two-hours-for-lunch period, as an inviolable tenet of the credo of American business.

Before long there was a well-defined tradition that no big business deal could be conceived or closed save across the luncheon table or between the first and 19th holes. Ratifications of big contracts, mergers, flotations of stock issues, formations of syndicates, selections of candidates for high offices, and deals of like moment that were effected elsewhere, were viewed with suspicion.

It should have been clear then that golf was done for; but the final degradation was yet to come. It remained for the Wisconsin Industrial Commission to place golf legally in the category of big business—along with General Motors, Standard Oil, Big Steel, and the movies—and thereby seal its doom.

Under recently promulgated orders of the commission, all caddies must be registered with its offices. They cannot be under 14 years of age; and, if under 16, cannot work more than 24 hours a week. If injured in pursuit of their professional duties, caddies are entitled to industrial compensation. Presumably, they are eligi-



The boys had better keep their shots straight on this No. 7 hole at Westwood CC, St. Louis, where the 1938 Western Open will be held June 14-16. Picture was taken from traps behind the green; tee is in background, arm of lake to the left, a creek directly in front of the elevated green, and if this isn't enough, note the narrow fairway with trees bordering both sides.

ble for unemployment insurance and old-age pensions.

Since golf is now classed as business, it must of course be regulated. Before long we may expect to have the NLRB fixing hours of play, and the Federal Trade Commission limiting production to 18 holes per day. Combinations in restraint of free competition, such as handicaps, will be forbidden. Par for all courses will be arbitrarily pegged at 72. All scores will be filed in triplicate, after being duly notarized; and any scores under par will be subject to excess deficit taxes.

Golf has only itself to blame. It should have read the handwriting on the wall, decades ago.

After reading that, and laughing, we wonder why golf didn't take over the government when the game had everything under its control. Golf isn't doing badly now, and, according to all available figures seems to have weathered the depression far better than other enterprises having a real estate element. Perhaps, when the game's performance in hard times is appreciated, golf will have another chance to run the nation.

Midwest Greenkeepers Dance, Dine—Midwest Greenkeepers' Assn. annual spring social event was held April 28 at the Glen Oak CC (Chicago district), with a large attendance of greenkeepers and their wives, and guests. Dancing, a floor show and cards followed the dinner. John MacGregor is president of the group. Al Lesperance, chairman, and Stanley Arndt, Frank Dinelli and Harold Clemens comprise the entertainment committee that arranged the pleasant affair.