

## New York City Golf Course Work Told in Newspaper Series

ONE of the standout jobs of newspaper golf writing this year is that done on the New York City public courses by Lawrence Robinson in the New York World-Telegram. For reader interest it registered strong on the sport pages and was a selling job on a public recreation that many a park course official would like to see copied in his community.

The Robinson series included pieces on the expert personnel constructing and operating the courses, construction and operating costs and golf architectural features.

In describing the New York golf course work done under the administration of Robert Moses as Park Commissioner, and with John Van Kleeck in charge of the golf, Robinson wrote, in part:

It is said that the peculiar genius of Robert Moses as a public official is his ability to pick the right men and give them their way. In a nutshell, that explains his amazing public-links progress in four years of service.

### Golf Courses Are Answer To WPA Cash

Back in 1933 Park Commissioner Moses gathered his staff chieftains for consultation. The problem was to find work for thousands and thousands of relief workers offered the department by the government. Other agencies wanted this labor, and a rapid program had to be drawn.

Moses had no illusions about what he called the "incredibly inefficient" relief army. But he did set avid eyes on the 15 per cent division for materials, the 85 per cent going to pay labor. What project best fitted WPA?

The answer was golf courses, where a man could do most with a pick or shovel and the least appropriation was required for materials.

What actually was expended in constructing or rehabilitating the ten courses cannot possibly be calculated. No itemizing was done by WPA. But there is a definite replacement value, in terms of what it would cost a private group to build the same courses. A conservative estimate of this amount, exclusive of land value (which must be near \$50,000,000), is \$3,000,000.

Of this amount, about \$1,500,000 represents construction, equipment, and maintenance of the courses. The other half is

the value of buildings—clubhouses, shelters, storage bins, equipment sheds, etc.

Most expensive of the courses to replace would be Forest Park and Split Rock, approximately \$200,000 in the case of each. Forest Park's cost jumped far out of proportion because of poor land and bisection of the old property by the Grand Central Parkway extension. Split Rock was built new on land cut from wooded, swampy and neglected property.

La Tourette, longest, most difficult course of the civic group, and Dyker Beach are next in value, each at about \$150,000. Both were completely remodeled from totally inadequate plants. Pelham, another new course built on part of an old site, would cost in the neighborhood of \$100,000 to replace. Kissena Park, shortest of the regular group, and Riis Park, the pitch-putt project in the Rockaways, have identical replacement value of about \$80,000 each.

It is probable that the actual expenditure runs into fantastic figures, despite the intensive efforts of party officials to weed out the "leaners," the "sleepers" and the "sneakers." Make your own guess, from ten to fifty million dollars.

Clubhouses, newly built at several of the plants, make more than another million in replacement value. There was no stinting, and wherever the Moses administration has built there are more than sufficient facilities for the course to run at peak capacity for years to come.

### California Salesmen Hold Tourney.—

More than 250 professionals, greenkeepers, club managers, newspapermen, and one amateur from each club represented by a professional, took part in the fifth annual Pro-Salesmen's tournament of Northern California, held October 3 at the California G&CC at Baden. A grand time was had by all at the day-long party, which was followed by an elaborate meal and entertainment in the evening. Charles McDonald was chairman of the event, and Jack Irwin and Don Forster assisted. Attendance was the greatest in the history of the tournament.

A purse amounting to \$800, a raffle of \$900, trophies costing \$250, and entertainment costing approximately \$500 gave everyone a chance to cash in on plenty of fun and dough, if they were lucky. Special events were a hole-in-one contest, a barrel contest, and a golf drawing.