

White lines trace layout of course in this aerial view of Governors Island GC. Because layout is crowded into seventeen acres, several fairways must cross one another.

Golf in New York Harbor

By "Mac" Taylor

Pro-grnkpr, Governors Island GC



SEVEN minutes by Government ferry from the Battery at the foot of Manhattan in New York Harbor lies Governors Island, on which is located the Governors Island GC, maintained for Army personnel in the Metropolitan area. Governors Island is the headquarters of the Second Corps Area of the United States Army, the home station of the 16th Infantry and auxiliary troops and populated by approximately 3,200.

Shortly after the turn of the century and the end of the Spanish-American War, the Army personnel stationed here at that time, sore from the rigors of that conflict, felt the need of relaxation—and so only nine years after the American Open and Amateur championships were established, a golf course of 9 holes and about 3,000 yards long was built under the direction of Fred J. Roth, who is now the greenkeeper at the Plainfield CC.

The course was originally built on about 20 acres around the original Fort Jay with its star-shaped fort and quadrangle and moat. Since then, due to the encroachment of living quarters, the course has been lessened to about 17 acres. Such an area may seem rather small to most golfers, but despite this limited space, it is considered one of the sportiest and best courses in the Metropolitan area. The total length of the course now is 1,875 yards with a par of 29.

Holes 1, 4, 5, 6, and 9 are on the south

side of the old fort, and are part of the parade ground. Holes 2, 3, 7 and 8 are on the west and north sides. On No. 1 there is no room for a hook, nor on No. 2—a road which is out of bounds borders those two holes. On No. 5 a wee slice will land out of bounds on the road that borders the east side of the course. The least hook on No. 9 results in the same kind of trouble. The moat which surrounds the old fort is some 15 feet deep and a slice on Nos. 6 and 8 will put the player in plenty of trouble. A hook on No. 8 is not only out of bounds but practically in the Harbor.

Straight Shots Pay

Golfers who are straight off the tee can score fairly well, but the least straying from the straight and narrow will boost their scores sky-high. As far as the writer knows the best score is a 30, made by Sgt. Leonard F. Estes.

The Governors Island GC is an adjunct of the Officers' club, membership of which is composed of active officers of the Army, reserve and retired officers, and their families stationed on Governors Island and in New York City and vicinity, and some officers of the Navy stationed hereabouts. Membership in the Officers' Club carries with it privileges of the golf course and tennis courts. About one hundred and fifty officers and members of their families avail themselves of these privileges.

Last year the entire course, with the exception of the greens and tees, was

In making up your club program for 1939, don't forget the caddie competitions and parties, suggests Wilbert M. Allen, pres. of Belmont Hills CC where the Wheeling Invitational tourney has been played for the last two years.

Proper publicity given caddie affairs from the start of the season reminds the youngsters that they have virtually a membership interest in the organization, hence helps to promote caddie performance and attendance.

ploughed under, 4 in. of topsoil spread, limed, fertilized and seeded to Kentucky blue, Chewings fescue, redbot and colonial bent. Some bad luck with the topsoil was encountered and now we are engaged in a battle with the 'Jersey Bent' which came with it. The course was closed for four normal playing months to give the new grass a chance, and we had to use wooden tees through the fairway for a while as a measure of protection from taking too much divot.

An underground watering system (with 77 heads) supplies water to the area on the south, which is also used as the parade ground. A five gang tractor mower raised to an inch and a half keeps the grass at a safe length.

The renovation of the fairways has been under the personal supervision of Col. Frank P. Lahm, chairman of the golf committee, and Lt. Col. W. C. White, post quartermaster, who handle all construction. All credit is due these two officers who have worked untiringly to see that the course is the best that the money and labor at their command could build.

Top Soil Blown Away

The renovation last season was necessary because erosion through the years on this wind and rain-swept island had washed away the original top soil. This erosion, coupled with the Japanese beetle scourge, practically ruined the old course, but the renovating, together with a copious application of colloidal arsenate of lead, should present an almost perfect course within the next year and a half.

Greens are of seaside bent, small and tricky. As stated before, the Japanese beetle has been a particularly ruinous pest. Situated as the island is, near the Jersey shore on the west and Brooklyn on the east, these pests are blown here in swarms and have gone into the soil by the millions. One or two of the greens are badly infested but the same application of colloidal arsenate was applied, and it is hoped that the cycle will be interrupted during the entrance into the soil

of the adult to deposit its eggs, and in the subsequent stages.

Our watering schedule is from two in the morning until eight o'clock and it seems to have eliminated brown-patch from our worries. *Poa annua* gave us some trouble at the beginning of last July, but forking, topdressing and reseeding to seaside helped stop it. Beetles are our greatest worry but we feel we now have them whipped.

Maintenance of the course is handled by the Army, as it is an integral part of the parade ground. Equipment consists of a five-gang fairway mower, three greens-mowers and two lawn mowers for the tees and approaches. During excessive heat we cut the greens to five-sixteenths and have few complaints. During good weather we try to pull this down to three-sixteenths. There is not enough money available to follow the best fertilizing program, but notwithstanding, the greens are in fair shape. The early morning watering is an immense aid, for even with the excessive heat and high humidity all greens will hold pitches in a manner pleasing to players.

Caddies on this course are sons and daughters of personnel stationed here. There are about 30 of these boys and girls, and they stay with us until their parents are transferred; then others come in to take their places.

The course is ideally situated for the personnel of the Island, for all most of them have to do after work is done, is to step out their back door and start playing. The golf course is the ideal recreation center and most of the personnel avail themselves of the privilege. Members' guests are permitted to play on payment of a nominal greens fee.

My shop is well stocked with necessities and there the clubs are stored and repaired for members. Plans are being made to enlarge the shop and I look for increased business this year.

Pierce Made Racing Official—Harold Pierce, USGA official and former president of the Massachusetts GA and long prominent in New England golf, has been appointed a member of the Massachusetts State Racing commission by Governor Saltonstall. Pierce has been head of the Green Section of the USGA, and in that capacity has seen plenty of the difficulties of turf research although not as much as has been witnessed by some of the horse turf researchers who have tried to parlay \$2 into a fortune.