

# Golf Is Tops at Wentworth

By Weston Westover

Golf in schools is developing to the point where the study of this field and its thoughtful encouragement is an important subject for pros, club officials and other department heads.

The kids are getting sold on the idea of playing the game and on the necessity of expert instruction for fullest enjoyment and proficiency.

How the kids, school authorities and the faculty member assigned to instruction look at the growing picture of golf education in schools is told in this article about the game's growth among students at one of the country's well-known military academies.

**Y**OUNG men who dream of delightful golf sessions at Pinehurst, White Sulphur Springs, and even St. Andrews in years to come, are given an opportunity to study the sport at Wentworth Military Academy, Lexington, Mo.

"Golf is tops at Wentworth," Capt. Owen Davis, golf instructor at the school, informs me. "Many folks consider this a minor sport, but today it is demanding major interest. The interest in golf here has surpassed all our expectations. Golf is so popular here that there are times when we must appease coaches of other sports and encourage boys to register for a sport other than golf."

## Response to Golf Is Amazing

The genial captain thought that he was going to have a picnic when he took the job offered to him by Wentworth. You can imagine his surprise when he took over the reins and discovered that golf was not only a sport but also a tantalizing habit with the cadets. Fifty students who came out for instruction this year verify this statement; golf is a hard game to resist when all of one's friends are talking and playing golf.

At any military school you will discover that athletics is featured as much as military training. The object back of this program is to help each student find at least one sport in which he can discover some modicum of pleasure, and to provide him with at least one form of

recreation wherein he can keep himself physically fit.

The athletic program at the school allows for golf instruction three times a week. When inclement weather prevails, classes are conducted indoors. Beginners are given intensive training while those in advanced classes are given special instruction as the need arises.

There is no extra charge for using the course at the Academy. Instruction and the use of the course is included in the tuition set for the year. The only expense is individual equipment, and as the average pro well comprehends, most golfers can be educated to become as proud of their golf outfits as their wives are of the dress styles they display.

"If you want to be a golfer," the Captain tells his novice class every year, "you have to feel the part and the proper clothing and clubs will help invest you with the required assurance that you can send that ball sailing out into space."

## Urges Use of Best Equipment

As the instructor he naturally advises boys on the very best make of equipment. Helping a cadet to purchase a complete set of clubs, bags, balls, shoes . . . these constitute an integral part of his daily program. The Wentworth quartermaster buys these goods upon the recommendation of Capt. Davis. "The best equipment usually brings the best results," he informs the boys as he warns them against the bargain buying habit of the prospective golfer who thinks that all he needs is a club, a cheap ball, and a lot of nerve. "Better to play a good game than to talk a big game," he advises time after time throughout the year. The Captain is a former University of Missouri champion.

Until this year the Academy leased the facilities of the Lexington CC; now the school has taken over the ownership of the club and operates it under its new name, the Wentworth CC. Though the school owns and directs the country club activities, membership is open to outsiders upon invitation, all of which helps in the elimination of unforeseen overhead.

About 60 men and women from three counties are members in good standing. Members come highly recommended and must be passed upon by the Board of Di-



Golf Instructor Capt. Owen Davis, center, emphasizes the importance of the correct grip, in this class lesson for beginning students in golf at Wentworth.

rectors. This insures a high type membership and assures the cadets clean, wholesome contacts. A transient rate is provided for occasional guests of members and cadets, and even transient players must pass a close scrutiny.

Immediately upon acquisition of the club the Academy built stables and added horseback riding as a feature. All cadets and members are permitted to ride upon the payment of a very small fee.

The club is also utilized for a variety of social functions. Company dances, alumni meetings, bridge sessions, and informal parties are conducted at the club. The club quarters are rented to reputable organizations from time to time when their events will not conflict with the school's social program.

Why do cadets prefer golf to other sports? For one thing it is a leisurely sport and one need not play the game as if he were rushing for the midnight train. Then too, golf provides for perfect muscular co-ordination, helps make one mentally agile, and helps acquire poise and assurance which are carried over in non-sport undertakings.

#### Lessons Important to Students

Today students are sagacious enough to understand that many of the breaks in life materialize on the golf course. They realize that landing jobs, securing promotions, placing orders, making valuable contacts, all are facilitated if one is a golfer. One cadet told Capt. Davis that he thought golf was as much a *sine quo non* today as is ballroom dancing. Another cadet confessed that he considered his golf course as important as he did his course in Money & Banking.

When students manifest this attitude, Capt. Davis does not reprimand them by pointing out that golf is a game for the blessed few who approach the sport with reverence—play it because of their love for a very noble and captivating game.

"After all," he continued, "the aim of the instruction in the school is not to prepare professional golfers, but rather to teach students to enjoy themselves on the links. If a student can be taught to play a little better than average, we feel that we have done a good day's work. Professionals are not turned out wholesale; pros grow into golf—they acquire not only the feel of the game, but also develop a mastery of it."

#### Beginners Use Cheaper Balls

Beginners are encouraged to use cheap balls or seconds because neophytes have a tendency to employ wild swings. An attempt is made to destroy the illusion that golf is an expensive game, a millionaire's pastime. Of course, once cadets have learned the art of keeping the eye on the ball and of knocking out a good drive, they are advised to use balls that will take the breeze and will chalk-up the yardage.

For this reason the greenkeeper always keeps a number of old balls in his supply room. These are sold to students for a nickel each, and if a few of these balls are lost, students are not big losers. All novice players strive to reach the stage where they can use good balls and keep from losing them.

The student in a military school has a steady daily grind. Not only does he have the usual academic tasks ahead of him, but he has anywhere from one to

### Nice Work—And You Can Get Plenty of It.

MAN AND WIFE to act as caretaker and cook for small country club near Charleston. Must live on premises. —*Charleston (W. Va.) Daily Mail, via Country Gentleman.*

three hours of military work too. Golf helps him to quit worrying about the obscurities in Donne or the intricacies in combat principles. After a session on the links the cadets lose all inertia and are ready for two hours of study during the evening C. Q.

The best players are selected to play against other schools, to participate in local tournaments. For those whose golf is so-so, there is still an opportunity to go out for the company team, and competition here is fierce. It means as much to the cadets for their company to win the golf championship as it does to win the highest military honors.

There are times when the golf teaching load becomes a bit cumbersome. After all is said and done, members are also entitled to instruction, though with them there is a fee charged for each lesson. Whenever his time does not allow him sufficient opportunity to give students individual attention they may require, he calls upon his assistant, Capt. Kahle. Ordinarily, they divide the work between them. Capt. Kahle instructs the high school lads, while Capt. Davis gives his attention to the college students. Nevertheless, he has a good idea of the progress each boy is making; accurate records kept in his office keep him informed of each student's school golf progress.

Capt. Davis practically talks golf day in and day out. In his attempt to keep tabs on all the boys, he insists that in addition to the instruction that he and Capt. Kahle give on the links, that each boy taking golf come in for a conference every month.

What is his greatest problem as a golf instructor? Capt. Davis will tell you that he has problems rather than a given problem. There is the jitterbug who is in such a hurry to hit the ball that anything you tell him will pass over his head; the jitterbug is advised to stick to dancing unless he can learn to concentrate on the game. Then there is the student who thinks he is a hot-shot just because he has made a round in near par. Others who must be brought down a few pegs are those who have been praised too much by

friends or by the sports writers in the school paper.

How will all this school instruction affect the pro? Capt. Davis believes that it will help him. "Instruction in the schools and colleges will simplify the work of professional instructors. The law of averages operating, a certain number of student golfers will develop a sufficient interest in golf that they will want to learn all that they can about the game. That is where the pro comes in. Pros and their students in such instances, need not start with the rudiments of golf.

"School and college instructors are not competing with pros," he affirms. "Rather they are trying to help create an interest in the game. Naturally, with the present demand for golf in the schools, the most that the instructor can do is to apply to his teachings a few principles of crowd psychology. The school instructor will carry students over the rough road; the pro will step in later to teach him the finer points about golf."

Golf is tops at Wentworth—one main reason why the school decided to establish its own club rather than use the facilities of the old Lexington CC. The country club is a paying proposition at the school, according to the Captain, and he should know, for besides being golf instructor, he is a trained accountant and the school registrar; he has inside dope on the entire situation.

## Fee Courses Offered Window Display Cards

WINDOW display cards for courses that want to advertise daily-fee facilities now are provided by the National Golf Foundation, 14 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, as the latest activity in golf PROMOTION.

There is a series of 3 different cards, on which the course name and address are to be specially printed. Cards are striking color jobs and make very attractive displays. Costs are below the cost of production, the difference being absorbed by the golf PROMOTION budget.

Samples of the cards and complete details have been mailed to all daily fee courses. Officials of courses that may be interested in making use of these cards, may secure samples, if they have not already received them, by writing the National Golf Foundation.