

What Will War Do To Golf?

Clubs considering what changes war would make in golf picture

FORESIGHTED officials are beginning to plan to adjust their membership situation to the national defense plans, especially keeping in mind the possibility of younger members being drafted.

The Audubon CC, Louisville, Ky., has decided to cancel dues of any member called into the service, during the period the member is in service, President B. R. Meidinger advises. Meidinger adds:

"In our last board meeting we decided to cancel dues for any man who was called in the draft during the period for which he was in actual service, and then taking him back at the end of such service in good standing. However, I do not think this will effect very many of our members, and of course will not be much of a problem. Our situation may be slightly different than a lot of clubs due to the fact that we are close to Fort Knox and also Bowman Field, which is to be a training place for a large number of pilots.

"Very likely there will be no reason for our membership to decrease. On the other hand, it would seem to me to be entirely possible that clubs may be forced to raise their dues if higher prices are a result, as I believe most clubs today are working on a very close margin concerning income and outgo. I assume, though, on the other hand, that cafe and bar sales would probably be greater."

R. W. Phillips, President, The Country Club of Waterbury (Conn.) recalls that during the first World War the club had virtually normal activity. He says:

"Naturally, many members of military age were away, but our section was filled with military officers, government experts, etc., and many of them used the club.

"The country and our part of it will be busy and will be earning money if the U. S. gets into war; but certainly no one works 100% of the day, and most emphatically exercise and recreation are necessary for everyone. I believe that in a war the club's golf and tennis playing, restaurant, etc., will be as active, anyhow, as in these recent four years.

And its revenues should not be greatly affected.

"Of course, caddies will not be as plentiful; but some of us will have to get used to double-caddying or carrying less clubs: and caddie-less contests may be unavoidable sometimes.

Phillips and other club officials who have commented on golf club prospects, call their forecasts off in the event of Hitler's conquest of Britain or extension of active hostilities to this country.

Golf continues to an astonishing extent in Great Britain despite some courses in the south of England being closed. The value of the game in caring for war-abraded nerves has been demonstrated conspicuously in Great Britain. In Germany, too, sports programs have been continued as war-nerve measures, although Germany never did go much for golf.

Generally, American golf club officials expect more disturbance to the course and clubhouse operations than to the membership situation as the result of an accelerated and far-reaching preparedness campaign. Consequently, plans for curtailment of the fancier features of house operation and an extension of mechanized course maintenance are being tentatively discussed.

Several officials who prefer not to be quoted believe that emphasis to be placed on physical conditioning will result in more golf. Some have expressed the opinion that a revision downward in golf club dues to attract more members in the 30-to-45-year classes will be dictated by developing conditions. They remark that fixed charges dictate a broadening of private golf club membership, possibly by accenting the physical benefits of golf more, instead of depending, as previously, principally on the social values of the game.

The president of a prominent club on the Pacific Coast comments that it would be a good thing for the nation, as well as for golf, if the idea could be put across that inefficiency and poor physical condition are disloyal acts.