

## SEASON PROVES GOLF HAS MET WAR'S DEMANDS

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Golf, according to early season forecasts, was due to stagger through 1943, badly handicapped by conditions brought by war.

Instead, as the following district reports indicate, the game didn't do badly at all. Retrenchment was in order everywhere and some private clubs took it on the chin harder than nearby courses open to public play. But play-volume, the index of the game's health, was uniformly up nationwide, with the exception of those areas with the more drastic gasoline restrictions. And even in those areas, golf posted an excellent record.

Following are analyses from representative metropolitan areas of how golf fared in the past half year.

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## California Had Best Year Since '28

By DARSIE L. DARSIE

FROM the standpoint of public interest and public participation more individuals are playing golf in California today than have at any time since the "golden days of 1928."

Tournament play has, of course, been curtailed, but club events, held each week, draw larger fields than they have for many years. The California Women's GA cancelled its entire program in 1943 because of gas and rubber rationing and the Southern California Womens' association followed suit—but mens' tournaments have been streamlined most successfully and have been closely tied into the war effort through bond sales, etc.

The annual California Amateur, played

at Del Monte, drew a field of 400 players, not up to the 1942 total of 550, but still large enough to produce a great tournament. The Del Monte womens' championship, played at Cypress Point course, found Mrs. George Zaharias (Babe Didrikson) winning the 36-hole final by a score of 13 and 12—with no round "out of the seventies."

The Amateur championship was streamlined to meet war conditions in a most interesting manner. All member courses were rated and a field of 485 golfers qualified on their home courses, adding to their scores the rating figures indicated. On this basis a very strong field of 32 players qualified for the match play at Hill-

crest CC, which can be reached by bus, 15 minutes from downtown Los Angeles.

The tournament was an unqualified success, with galleries paying a fee—all money realized being turned over to the Citizens Committee of the Army and Navy. By permitting players to qualify at their home courses a minimum of gas and rubber was used and little, if any, time was lost to the war effort.

#### Movie Stars Help Out

The Southern California PGA, the S. C. G. A. and members of Lakeside's Country Club have cooperated most successfully in putting on Victory Tournaments at Wilshire, Santa Ana, San Bernardino and Ventura. In each case all receipts have been turned over to war charities and stars of the links as well as motion picture stars, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Babe Didriksen, Andy Clyde, Mickey Rooney, Johnny Weissmuller and a host of others, have given of their time, freely, to make these events successful. The Victory Tournament at Santa Ana CC, close by the Santa Ana Army Air Base, drew galleries of more than 7,500 persons.

In many ways clubs have been turning their attention to aiding the war effort.

Oakmont, owned by the "banana king," W. W. Crenshaw, proved the champion Victory Garden club of them all. Crenshaw, himself, letting his racing stable run itself, has turned to the business of raising tomatoes, potatoes, corn, lettuce, carrots, egg plants, etc., with a vengeance. For months he has spent most of each day, hoe in hand, watching his gardens grow. From the middle of August to the middle of October, members, passing through the golf grill, were urged to purchase lug boxes of beautiful tomatoes—with a dozen new fruit jars thrown in with each lug. An average of 500 pounds of tomatoes a day was harvested in this time. More than 40 acres of the rough at Oakmont is used in Mr. Crenshaw's private garden.

Other clubs, too, have found victory gardens the means of keeping their tables in green vegetables, the Los Angeles CC having one of the best.

#### Buy Bond; Replay Round

During the Third War Loan drive, Oakmont put on a special tournament in which a player bought a bond to enter the 18-hole medal play handicap event. If he didn't like his round he bought another bond and played it over. In four days time more than 240 bonds, totalling \$7,800, were

sold. Other clubs are planning similar events.

The Southern California Open, played for \$1,000 worth of war bonds over the county-owned Santa Anita course, found a field of more than 200 competing. A most spectacular final round saw Willie Hunter, former British Amateur champion and now veteran professional of the Riviera CC, overtake Lloyd Mangrum with a birdie at the 71st hole—and then go on to win with a par at the last hole, 278 to Mangrum's 279. Marvin Stahl, now a war worker in Los Angeles, was third with 280. Just before the start of the final round, Bob Hope took the first tee and sold \$12,000 in bonds to the gallery.

William P. Bell, president of the 36-hole Sunset Fields public links, reports capacity play every week-end at his courses. They are located on both bus and electric car lines and are but six miles from downtown Los Angeles—consequently, are profiting by the gas and rubber situation. However, strange as it may seem, Griffith Park's municipal courses, much farther out, still are playing to full capacity both through the week and on week-ends.

#### Food Is Problem

Country clubs, with a very few exceptions, are meeting the challenge of conditions successfully, although most have streamlined operations to meet conditions. Few of them serve dinners and few permit members to have guests for lunch. Food rationing has hit them rather hard in this respect. However, practically all close-in clubs have filled their membership lists and have waiting lists established. Golf courses have suffered a lack of experienced help and they are rather ragged and unkempt in contrast to their usual immaculate appearance. Caddies, save at a few of the clubs, are conspicuous by their absence. Even so, play has not fallen off, members either pushing caddie carts or carrying Sunday bags with half a dozen clubs.

There have been some casualties worth noting.

The once exclusive Flintridge CC, scene of George Von Elm's first California triumph in Championship back in 1921, has disappeared. For three or four years it struggled along under a bonded indebtedness of some \$280,000. A new deal, on a monthly rental basis, carried the club along for a year. Finally, a few weeks ago, Keith Spaulding, horseman, polo player and sportsman, purchased the second nine holes and made the 60 acres

over into riding trails, jumping fields, etc. The first nine holes, after a brief existence, gave up the ghost.

Cheviot Hills, formerly the very popular California Country Club, found a bonded indebtedness of \$480,000 too much—reorganized with the bondholders agreeing to more than cut the figure in half—and still could not make the grade. The club was taken over by the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company which closed both course and field house—but at the moment a new group, with the mystery man golfer, John Montague, at its head, has taken an option on the property and proposes to open it as an exclusive motion picture club in the near future. It will be called Rolling Hills.

In the San Diego area an interesting situation developed when the San Diego CC, at Chula Vista, in financial difficulties, sold golf course and club to the Rohr Aircraft Company as a recreation center for employees Ralph Guldahl, former Open champion, is the professional—and business is booming.

The old Rancho Club, owned by the United States Government and operated as a public links by the late La Verne Nichols, "blew up" when Nichols died a few months ago. Today the City of Los Angeles is negotiating with the Federal

government and expects to purchase the property and operate it as a public links. It is close in and good property—but Uncle Sam has a million dollar tax lien against it.

There, in a rambling sort of way, is the golf picture in Southern California. Clubs that are doing well are doing wonderfully—but most of the food served is of the non-ration variety. Professionals in many cases devote eight hours to war work and perhaps four hours to golf instruction. Caddies are, largely, in military service and an acute shortage prevails everywhere. The golf ball situation isn't bad. Players purchasing golf balls are required to turn in old balls.

The clubs that have failed seemed destined to fail anyway, as in every case their downfall could be attributed to top heavy bond issues against them. It has, actually, been surprising that those that are closed held on as long as they did. Today both clubs and public links are in excellent financial condition and will, assuredly, weather the storm.

But—

The most frequent topic of locker room conversation you hear is the question: "When is Washington going to let us have a little rubber for golf balls?"

## Washington Courses Jammed All Season

By WALTER McCALLUM

GOLF around the nation's Capital went into a sharp nose dive on the competitive side during 1943, but where the solons of the game early in the year decided competition was no go, the golfers themselves tossed the challenge back at them with more friendly rounds than ever before played on overcrowded courses.

Early in the year the Congressional CC, one of Washington's largest links organizations, with a membership of around 800, was taken over by the War Department as a base for military training on Congressional's nearly 400 acres. That threw hundreds of golfers out of a place to play. They flocked to other clubs. The net result: long waiting lists at several of the dozen clubs around the Capital, a frenzied rush to get in, and many forced to forego the game entirely because of crowded country clubs.

Public links concessionaire S. G. Loeffler, operator of 5 public courses

within the circumscribed limits of the District of Columbia, closed his East Potomac Park course, center of public activity and the Navy took over the West Potomac Park layout, building dormitories on the course. That shunted public course play to Rock Creek Park and Anacostia Park for whites, and Langston for colored. Play at all courses was heavy, but lacking in competition.

Two periods of no-pleasure automobile driving cut down private club play, but despite the gasoline edict the golfers thronged all courses, and on lifting of the pleasure driving ban the game returned to above normal activity. So far this year all clubs around Washington report much higher play than for the same period a year ago.

Washington is crowded with service officers who get an afternoon a week off for exercise. During the long days of summer they slipped out late in the afternoon.

Transportation restrictions naturally affected play to some degree, but in the face of crowded bus and streetcar facilities golf showed an upturn in total rounds played at all clubs.

Congressional is the only club around Washington which has closed its doors to golfers. That club has a favorite contract with the War Department which will aid in reducing its outstanding debt when the property is returned to the club. Service men were welcomed, free of charge in the case of enlisted men, and with reduced fees to officers, at most of the clubs around Washington. Woodmont, located near the great Naval Medical Center, took in around 40 Navy officers Washington G&CC's service roll has a waiting list, and Chevy Chase and Columbia have long civilian waiting lists. Kenwood took some of the Congressional members left out when their club closed, and Manor took others, while some went to Indian Spring, but on the whole all clubs were crowded.

With the membership at peak all clubs are in good financial shape, and expect to remain so for the duration of the war. When the war ends and Congressional returns to the private club fold many old members will return, but Washington could absorb another big private club without losing many members from other links organizations.

The Women's District GA, a lovely outfit, carried through a 12-event tourna-

ment schedule, with smaller fields than in past years, due to transportation restrictions. Neither the women or the men held a championship tournament.

The pros, lacking sales of clubs and balls in the volume of other years, report diminution in business over pre-war years, but are carrying on, hopeful conditions will improve, particularly on the golf ball side. Wiffy Cox, veteran Congressional pro, went to Hempstead, L. I., when his club closed for the duration.

Columbia, Chevy Chase, Kenwood and Manor planted victory gardens last spring, with Columbia making more than two-score plots available for its members. Vegetables raised in the gardens, in some cases, were used in the clubs themselves.

Around Washington, which is sure to be overcrowded during the war, golf needs more room and more courses. Outlying clubs are sure to suffer from lack of transportation, but the clubs which are on street car or bus lines will far exceed normal peace time play, and their business operations are sure to show a better situation than in pre-war years.

Early this year some took the attitude that a man carrying a bag of golf clubs might be a target for finger pointing, as a war effort obstructionist. During the period of gas rationing that was particularly true. But now the situation has changed. Golfers no longer fear they will be called war obstructionists by carrying their clubs openly.

## Atlanta District Has Fine Year

By O. B. KEELER

**T**AKING it up one side and down the other, I'd say the golfing situation in the Atlanta district is decidedly more up than it is down, as compared with the performance last year; that is, in 1942, the first year of the War Years. That goes for the private clubs and the public courses as well.

East Lake, Capital City, Druid Hills and Ansley Park report a somewhat startling influx of new members in our town, and special provisions are made for officers and enlisted men in the Service to pay dues for the period they are to be in this vicinity, rather than the usual initiation fees for membership. Play at Old East Lake, which closed its No. 2 course nearly a year ago, has picked up to where they are contemplating reopening that layout. It is up around 200 on Saturday and

Sunday, with 35-45 on week days. I have not heard of any clubs in Atlanta or the neighboring towns closing, though some clubs, as the Coosa CC at Rome, have shut off nine holes.

The physical condition of all the layouts around here is emphatically better than usual; not only better than last year. The favoring weather had a lot to do with this, but the fact remains that most of our courses are in as fine condition as they ever have been.

The general attitude toward golf is somewhat complicated. The age-trend of course is toward golfers of 40 years and up; and the interest is in golf as a recreation—not as a tournament competition. The ladies (God bless 'em), also, are carry-

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## Golf Meets War Demands

(Continued from Page 12)

ing on gallantly. A lot of them have enlisted in various Service branches and Red Cross work; a lot of them are canning, or were during the season; yet the gals played their Georgia State and Atlanta City championships, with fairly representative fields, while the boys have called off their formal competition, and confined their tournaments to club championships, compressed as much as possible into week-end affairs.

Some of the clubs went in for Victory gardens. East Lake reports 50 bushels of excellent sweet potatoes, scaling up to 5 pounds, and a flock of turnips. Capital City had a Victory garden, but lost most of the produce during the nights—which, of course, means that the vegetables went on somebody's table; East Lake produced worthy supplies from a garden near the No. 4 green, and used them for the club service.

The rapidly increasing Bell Aircraft population at Marietta, 20 miles from Atlanta, has boosted play at the famous old Marietta CC; and North Fulton, the last course laid out by the late Chandler Egan, and a truly great layout, reports at least 200 regular players from the Bell plant.

There are 7 public courses in the Atlanta District, five city and two county, and it is rather significant that under the regime of George Clayton, president of the Atlanta Public Links GA, three of our public courses, North Fulton, Adams Park and Bobby Jones, recently have joined the USGA.

"And we should like it to be generally known," adds Mr. Clayton, "that we are grooming North Fulton for the National Public Links championship, to be played there the second year after the War is over. Denver has the first turn; and North Fulton the second."

It may also be noted with a modicum of pride that the Atlanta Public Links GA got Bing Crosby and Bob Hope down here to play in an exhibition four-ball match with Johnny Bulla and Ed Dudley, president of the PGA, for the Red Cross—and the biggest gallery that ever followed a golf match in Atlanta, at the the Capital City CC, turned up \$5,220 for the Red Cross fund.

The private clubs all are encouraging Service men to play, with half-rates where indicated; the public course rates are so low as not to make much difference—

25 cents for the nine-hole layouts; 50 cents for the 18-hole courses, on week days, and up to 50 cents and \$1 on Saturdays and Sundays.

The transportation problem in and around Atlanta is not acute, because of rather good service by the street car and bus lines.

On the whole (again) the 1943 golfing situation is a lot better than it was in 1942, when everybody was pretty much up in the air and not always with the right end up. The main problem right now is golf balls. One big, private club recently was down to one type, a 50-cent ball, and still is dealing only in reprocessed balls. I beg to record that inquiry from one and all—what about the golf ball problem? They would adore to get some inside information from you fellows who know what there is to know about it.

The caddie problem of course sticks out like a sore thumb; but a lot of more or less stalwart addicts are toting their own clubs; and the program of play is being staggered so as to fit the situation as well as possible.

But no clubs or courses are closing up, so far as I can learn; and financially the private clubs seem to be going very well; the membership maintenance really is remarkable. Our folks down here seem sensibly inclined to keep on golfing for the relief it brings from the strain of work and worry; and at this writing it seems a reasonable conclusion that they will keep on playing, for the duration. And there again, what about them golf balls?

## Transportation Bothers West Pennsylvania Golfers

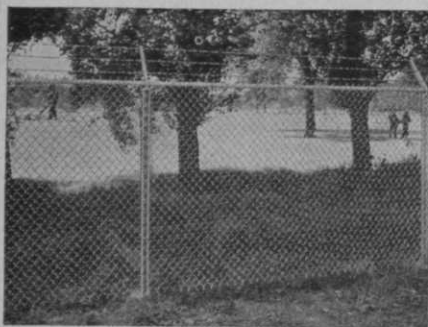
By CHET SMITH

WESTERN Pennsylvania golf was down noticeably this year, but to quote Mr. I. W. Danforth, president of the West Penn GA, "There was no damage at all to the basic popularity of the game or to the organization structure of the individual clubs or the ruling organizations—which will make for a quick return to normalcy when the great day dawns."

During the ban on pleasure driving, play at both private and public courses was off about 50 per cent, but when the ban was lifted Sept. 1, there was an immediate 25 per cent rise all around, so

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it may be deduced that the war has lopped off about one-quarter of the number of golfers hereabouts. Clubs that cater to younger membership were hard hit, but most of the years' resignations were due to members leaving for the services, rather than other causes. Not a single major club closed in Western Pennsylvania; the only one that closed up shop was Wildwood, a former private course that had been taken over by a professional operator, who sought to turn it into a semi-private venture.

In the pay course league, Schenley, city-owned, and located immediately on street car and bus lines, had an almost normal season, while the county-owned North and South parks courses, which lack good transportation facilities, were reduced to about half their usual play.

Servicemen were given almost a free hand. They were welcome everywhere but, because Pittsburgh is near no large camp and thus has no more than a handful of 'permanent resident' soldiers and sailors, this was a negligible factor in the game here.

The clubs did well financially, heavily supported the dime-a-round program, but didn't do much in the Victory Garden line. They found for the most part members preferred their own gardens nearer home—although the employees of many clubs did garden on the grounds.

The Women's GA called off its inter-club matches and all district tournaments, but women's play remained at a high level, and the girlies, as usual, saved the day.

Nearly all the district professionals spent only week-ends at the clubs and worked during the week in defense plants. Sam Parks, Jr., the former open champion, was an example. He could be found at his club—South Hills—only on Satur-

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## TIMELY TURF TIPS

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Greens and tees should not be neglected. They should get enough fertilizer to ward off disease and maintain dense turf. We expect to furnish Milorganite in limited quantity for this purpose and hope before long chemical nitrogen will become available again for use on these vitally important areas.

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day afternoons and Sundays. He is with a local steel company and doing a good job. The PGA held its open championship but extended it over some three weeks, with the matches being played whenever the participants could arrange to get to the course on the same day. Parks copped the duke in this one.

The West Penn GA dispensed with its one-day tournaments and held only the amateur championship and the junior. The latter was held early in the season and nearly half the field that took part is now in uniform.

The feeling here is that golf has taken only a mild beating and will be ready to come back strong when the war is over. What will happen next year depends, of course, on how many holes-in-one the absentees score in Europe and the Pacific, but all organizations are keeping the wheels turning. All they will have to do when the resume play order comes through is throw 'er into gear and move off.

### Help Lt. Horton Smith Bring Golf to Army Fliers

Lieut. Horton Smith of the Army Air Forces at Seymour Johnson Field, Goldsboro, N. C., reports that there's a demand and need for a practice driving range and putting green at the field where he's stationed. It looks like Horton has, as an after-hours duty, the job of getting these facilities planned, installed and equipped.

Horton has been so completely at work as an Army airman he hasn't been able to keep in touch with what the situation is about getting equipment for the proposed facilities. So, in answering his letter of inquiry to GOLFDOM, we told him that these Army and Navy installations generally are supplied by collections of

### A Job to Do

You're an important guy right now, Mr. Pro. You must meet a lot of problems to keep your members playing, and have your course in good condition. Many of you work at war jobs, yet do double duty at the club so that your players may continue to gain healthful relaxation through their golf.

Yes, you Pros have a job to do, and you are doing it.



ADDRESS FOR MAIL—LENEXA, KANSAS

Kenneth Smith