

# Clubs Tell HOW They Are Doing

★ It gradually is dawning on the nation that with selective service calling for most of the younger men the older fellows are going to have to be in better condition for more work. As golf is beyond any question the most popular outdoor participating game for men and women past their thirties the game has to do an important wartime job in continuing on an operating basis that will best fit the war-working populace for labors and strains considerably beyond normal.

Almost every condition is against conducting golf club operations on the basis required by the increased importance of golf in the wartime recreational plan.

In the first place, there's the ball situation. Despite strenuous campaigning to get used balls for reconditioning there's bound to be a diminishing quantity, and the allotment of a even small amount of new material for ball manufacture still isn't in sight.

Then, there's the transportation problem which may get tougher when the European northern invasion begins and Nazi submarine and plane attacks on Allied shipping are conducted on an all-out desperation basis.

And, of course, there are the labor and material shortages, taxes and the other customary problems of all wartime business.

Nevertheless, the record and abilities of wartime golf club officials and department heads shows that the adverse factors are regarded as challenges, rather than edicts to fold up.

There isn't now, or has there been previously, adequate appreciation for the job golf club officials do as a sideline to their own urgent business matters. Nor is there general public appreciation of the fact that the "country club" set, when the pinch is on, stands up as strong American sportsmen. It's been pleasantly and positively surprising, even to golf club offi-

cial, to experience so little complaining and so much cheerful cooperation from members in adjusting club operations to wartime conditions.

Reports from representative clubs contain many evidences of resourcefulness that has not only kept clubs operating in unexpectedly smooth form but has knitted the membership closer together.

*Harold W. Hatch, pres., The Shuttle Meadow Club, Inc., New Britain, Conn.,* tells how that club has carried on notwithstanding the gasoline situation which was much harder on clubs in the eastern part of the country than it was elsewhere. He says:

## Maintain Lively Interest

"We have had considerable labor trouble as most clubs have had and for this reason about a year and a half ago we decided to close down Mondays. On account of the fuel situation we closed the club during February and March, 1943. and this year we were able to get sufficient oil but felt the employees should have a month's vacation so have closed for the month of March.

"We have discouraged outside parties at the club in nearly every case as we felt that the club should be available at all times to the members who are using it more than in normal times, principally due to the food shortage.

"We have a very lively Entertainment committee and have endeavored to have something going on to attract the younger members once or twice a month, as we felt that unless we could keep up the interest of the younger members, we would have plenty of resignations which would cost the club considerably more than the small loss we might take on entertainment. Our results in this respect have been fully justified as we have lost practically no members and have added a few during the past year, and I believe our

club has a reputation of serving the members better than any of the clubs in this vicinity during the past year or two.

"The House operations were in the red for the past two years, but the membership dues have kept up in a satisfactory manner notwithstanding the dues of those in the service which have been remitted.

"We are planning an active year and hope to achieve the same result in 1944 as we have in the past two years."

### Corporation Guest Plan

★ An idea worthy of consideration by many other clubs is the corporation guest privilege plan successfully used by the *Country Club of Greenfield, Mass. L. H. Martin, the club's president*, tells about that plan and other high spots of the club's fine job in adjusting to wartime:

"The Greenfield Country club last year had forty-eight active playing members in the armed services, which, of course, made a substantial reduction in the revenue of the club.

"In May, 1943, restrictions were placed upon driving cars for pleasure and these restrictions were not lifted until the middle of September. Our club is located about two and one-half miles out and arrangements were made for horse-drawn vehicles to transport the club members on Saturdays and Sundays. This was slow transportation; however, it gave the members a lot of fun.

"The Corporation Guest Privilege plan was the one which produced sufficient additional revenue to maintain the course and kept the financial affairs in a satisfactory condition for the 1943 season. This plan covered the greens fee for guest, such as customers and salesmen. A committee was appointed to call upon our local corporations and the subscriptions for this plan from six of these corporations offset the loss of dues from the forty-eight members in the armed services. The manpower shortage was acute in this area and Mr. Sennett, our club manager, did a great deal of actual work on the course during the entire season.

"We plan to continue along the same line this year, with some new ideas in mind that may develop as the season progresses."

### Economy Move That Failed

★ By no means all of the efforts in wartime adjustment turned out successfully. But officials have been frank in admitting failure of experiments suggested by conditions. At *Stockbridge (Mass.) CC* the club thought reducing the course to nine holes might be worthwhile economy. It wasn't, as the club's *sec.-treas., Heaton I. Treadway*, tells in relating Stockbridge's wartime experiences and plans. He says:

"Last summer, partially due to the

desire to conserve manpower and partially to unusual weather conditions, we kept only nine holes instead of 18 holes in playing condition. We cut the grass occasionally on the nine holes we were not using and cut the greens often enough so that they did not deteriorate. From a labor saving point of view, this did not prove a successful experiment. We were only able to decrease our working force by one man and our loss in revenue more than offset the cost to the club of this man.

"We gave all the men on the course an opportunity of working just as many hours as they wished to work thus increasing their individual revenue without increasing the cost of the pay roll. This was very much worthwhile.

"With labor shorter this year than ever and the shortage of golf supplies, if our professional does not go in the Army, he is going to work on the course all of the time. This will reduce our labor requirements by two men as he is a better worker than the ordinary golf maintenance man.

"Members have been educated not to expect to find caddies at the club and are enjoying carrying their own bags.

"Temporary tees will be installed this year, wherever in the past golf balls have been lost in a hazard on the drive. This will conserve the golf balls."

### Streamlining the Plant

★ At one of the prominent eastern clubs foresighted study of what the club might expect in wartime operating conditions saved much time and money in switching over to the present basis.

As at many other older and famed clubs the clubhouse was laid out for those old days when a large staff was available. An official of the club relates:

"Our setup consists of a main clubhouse and a separate locker building. The result is that we have operated two plants and the number of employees was relatively high. By closing our main clubhouse and making some alterations in our locker building, whereby that building included a small dining room, we were able to cut the number of house employees to about one-third of the number used under normal conditions and cut our operating costs very materially. The result is that with a very much reduced membership the past two years we have been able to operate in the black.

"Our restaurant was operated as a concession on a plan under which the concessioner had a guarantee and participated in any profits which might be made.

"I believe that in clubs custom dictates to a great degree methods of doing things and business-like methods are

sometimes not in use. It has been astounding to us the past few years to learn what could actually be done in the way of saving money.

"We have set up budgets in all departments which were materially lower than we have had in previous years, and we have been able to stay within those budgets. To be sure our members haven't had all the little services which they may have had in the past, but generally speaking they have taken it in good grace and cooperated with the management in their efforts to save money."

#### From Red to Black

★ What has astonished many a fine country club is that enforced wartime economies have performed the seeming miracle of putting into black figures the annual statements of clubs that have been reconciled to deficits.

Reduction in service and maintenance due to wartime shortages, and generally increased memberships of the better, fairly well located clubs, have figured in bringing income ahead of expenditures.

The experience of the *Westwood CC* (*St. Louis district*) is typical of that of numerous first class private clubs. *Westwood's president, Henry H. Stern*, says of the club's wartime operation:

"We operate on a fiscal year beginning November 1st, consequently, we were already in our 1942 fiscal year at the time of Pearl Harbor. Our budget had already been fixed and we were proceeding on a more or less normal basis. Our 'normal' basis involved a budget of about \$80,000 which included an item of \$20,000 or \$21,000 for maintenance and operation of our 18-hole golf course. Our membership is about 600, which includes 325 regular members, of whom perhaps 290 are active members.

"Our annual meeting at the beginning of the 1943 fiscal year was held in the latter part of November, 1942. It so happened that gas rationing became effective in this region the same week as our annual meeting. Inasmuch as our club is located some 10 miles from the city limits, accessible only by private car—there being no bus or street car lines available—we were somewhat apprehensive as to the effect of gas rationing on the use of the club.

"Accordingly, at the annual meeting in November, 1942, several alternative methods of operation were proposed. The membership approved operation on a so-called 'restricted' basis. All items of expense were kept at a minimum, maintenance of the golf course being budgeted at \$8,000 and our total budget being fixed at approximately \$40,000; all predicated on the assumption that the members would not use the club very freely during gas rationing.

"To our pleasant surprise, we found last year a very considerable use of the club. Members formed informal car pools, saved their gas during the week and in other ways managed to come to the club on weekends, particularly Sundays. The heavy use of the club, with the club operation projected on a restricted basis, produced a very satisfactory result financially. Ordinarily the club operates on an annual deficit of \$12,000 or \$15,000. Last year the operations resulted in a slight profit.

"In view of our experience last year, the Budget committee and the Board of Governors are planning a wider and more open scope of operations this year; more or less returning to our pre-war, or 'normal', method of operation. What effect the recent order reducing gas allowances in the Middle West from three to two gallons a week will have on the use of the club, we do not know. We are going to feel our way and proceed on a day-to-day basis."

#### Horse-and-Buggy Days

★ Establishment of horse-drawn transportation for members didn't figure appreciably in relieving the travel problem. Its main achievement seems to have been publicity for clubs. It did show that clubs were determined to carry on.

*Wallace Montague, pres., Worcester (Mass.) CC* tells that the club's two-horse carryall which took players three-fourths of a mile between the clubhouse and end of a bus line was only moderately used and the income didn't pay for the maintenance of the service. *Worcester*, like most other clubs, had to operate on a limited basis but *President Montague* says the course was kept in good playable condition.

One thing that *Montague* and other presidents of successful wartime clubs observed is the value of keeping the club members together during the off season for golf. The *Worcester* clubhouse was open all winter—with sharply limited service, of course—and bowling leagues of men's and mixed teams during the winter maintained the friendly spirit and contacts of members.

#### Public Course Problem

★ About as tough a problem as golf operations confronted last year was the situation that was faced by eastern public courses not near transportation.

How public golf has been continued at one of these establishments is told by *Arthur J. Sullivan, pres., Passaic County (N. J.) Park Commission*, who says:

"Operating a public golf course, as part of a county park system, it has been our policy to have receipts cover maintenance costs. We have been successful

(Continued on Page 38)

## CLUBS TELL HOW THEY ARE DOING

(Continued from Page 13)

in this ever since the golf course was opened in 1931, in spite of the fact that we have held to high standards of maintenance.

"Early in 1943, we realized that the ban on pleasure driving would seriously affect the play on the course by reason of the fact that we are not conveniently situated on or even near public transportation lines. Our play began to fall off as much as 80 per cent of what it was the year previous, which was one of our record years. We immediately began to reduce our expenditures. Having previously maintained a high standard of fertilization, we felt that we could reduce this for one year, particularly on the fairways. We did not hire a green-keeping force as large as we were accustomed to. This was easy, since labor was not available anyway. Therefore, we paid less attention to the rough, traps and other so-called embellishments. Having always kept our equipment up to date and in good repair, we required no new equipment and very few repairs.

"Economy was the watch word, sacrificing where we felt that it would do the least harm. As a result, and in spite of a reduction in play of 53½ per cent over the previous year and 49¾ per cent in receipts, we were able to maintain and operate the course within our income.

"We anticipate an increase in play during 1944, but are keeping our fingers crossed, and are carrying out the same ideas we practiced last year with the exception that we do not intend to sacrifice any of the fertilization program. Constant watch will be kept of conditions so that we can give the best golfing under the circumstances."

### Keep Up Club Looks

★ From many club officials, managers and greenkeepers come evidence of the vital importance of maintaining attractive appearance of the club plant. Despite the gloomy talk about taxes, and the necessity of working longer hours, there are many potential and desirable members for clubs. They won't join if the club shows signs of giving up and being allowed to go to seed.

Hillcrest CC, Kansas City, Mo., is typical of the wisely run club that has done everything possible to preserve a bright atmosphere in the club properties and appeal to members and prospective members as the sort of a place at which the family can get the relief from tension it needs these days.

*President Clarence A. Hill of Hillcrest says:*

"Hillcrest, even being handicapped by present conditions, has continued to grow and in spite of the fact that many of our members have left us in order to serve in the armed forces.

"The enthusiastic drive for new members on behalf of our Membership committee has more than recovered our losses, and we are showing a nice increase instead of decrease on our roster.

"It too has been agreed upon by our members that our club should at all times maintain the best appearance possible, and much has been done to improve our property for the comfort and enjoyment of our members as well as for its appearance.

"We have organized bowling leagues in which the members and their wives are participating. This has been successful beyond our expectations; exhibited by the fact that we have a league consisting of some 24 teams.

"Wednesdays have been set aside for 'Family Day'; the ladies playing golf in the morning, the men in the afternoon and a buffet dinner is served that evening. This is the only thing we have done to promote golfing activity in our efforts to comply with the O. P. A. and the gas rationing regulations."

### Expand Activities

★ Another thing many clubs have learned during the war years is that the family now places the country club higher than ever before in its recreation plan. Nobody has come up with an explanation for this. It is suspected by some that the high pressure and worry of wartime conditions and the upsets in domestic management have directed people toward the country clubs to get into an outdoor atmosphere of temporary escape and rebuilding.

Numerous clubs that never before kept open in the winter this past winter kept a man or two at the clubhouse, a few logs in the fireplaces and catch-as-catch-can sandwich service, and made the clubhouses popular social centers for card games and winter sports on the course or skating rink.

*J. D. Murphy, pres., Butte (Mont.) CC* tells of the exceedingly active situation at the Butte club:

"The Butte CC is in excellent condition, having about 400 members, plus 55 members in the armed forces. Last year we had the finest golfing season ever witnessed in Butte. More games than ever before were played on our beautiful 18-hole complete grass golf

(Continued on Page 40)



## CLUBS TELL HOW THEY ARE DOING

(Continued from Page 13)

course. We expect an even livelier season in 1944.

"Our club facilities are in excellent shape. We have a fine swimming pool, two tennis courts, well lighted, where games can be played in the summer late into the night. We have a well appointed clubhouse with all the necessary conveniences. This winter our members and their families enjoyed our club nearly as much as in the summer time, due to the fact that we have an excellent ice rink, well lighted and equipped with 'Juke-Box' music. Each day and night skating was enjoyed and several evenings large skating parties were held, thus making our club an inviting all-year around place. Our winter activities proved as profitable as the summer ones.

"We are now in the midst of a campaign for the gathering of old golf balls to be sent in for reprocessing and we feel that these efforts will result in our members being provided with golf balls for this season's golf."

### Soldier Help on Course

★ If your club has struggles to keep itself operating you may be cheered up by the experience of the Rancho Santa Fe (Calif.) GC, which has about every problem in the book but continues in good shape.

Despite the club's problems the members think of the servicemen first, providing free loan clubs and balls. When the uniformed guests enjoy themselves the Rancho Santa Fe members figure that they themselves are getting a bonus from their golf club expenses.

The club does something that other clubs can do in engaging soldiers or sailors for course work when the men have free time and arrangements can be made with nearby Army or Navy authorities. In many places the Army and Navy officers are eager to make these off-time employment opportunities known to men, and the men frequently are eager to earn the extra money and to get a change of scenery.

J. A. Lancaster, pres., Rancho Santa Fe GC, tells of the club's wartime operations:

"Our problems have been acute and numerous. First, labor shortages. Our help has been attracted by higher pay or has been inducted into the Army, and all we have left of our maintenance crew is our greenkeeper and one old man for raking traps and doing clean-up work around the tees and greens. We are able occasionally to get some soldier labor and during the summer and on Saturdays

and holidays get some high school boys. But we have gotten by, and our course is really in excellent condition. We have a complete clubhouse crew of women, except for locker room clean-up. We have no pros as both our pros have gone into military service.

"Our second big problem is revenue. We are 25 miles from the nearest city of any size and gas rationing has cut down our regular play substantially.

"Beginning December 7th, 1941, we have extended the privileges of the course without any charge to all enlisted men and non-coms in all branches of the services. We even furnish clubs and golf balls free. This, we believe, is a service unique among golf courses in the United States. It has brought us considerable officer play for our regular greens fee charges and this extra play, together with the clubhouse profits, has offset substantially our drop in normal revenue.

"We have promoted and encouraged small tournaments for military personnel at U. S. Marine Base, U. S. Naval Training Station, Camp Elliot, Camp Pendleton and Camp Callan, all located nearby. This additional revenue plus our lower operating costs has made it possible for us to keep going but it has been a real struggle."

### Problems, Solutions, Differ

★ Drastic reductions in clubhouse social and food operations have been found advisable at some first class clubs although the usual thing is to keep the clubhouse going to the fullest extent permitted by help and rationing.

At Happy Hollow club, Omaha, Nebr., the club has gone as near as possible to a 100 per cent golf club basis, and with satisfaction to its members.

Pres. Allen E. Cope of Happy Hollow tells of the club's operation:

"I think our club has done just about what many other clubs in these times have found it necessary to do. We are fortunate in being able to meet our obligations and, most of all, keep our golf course in first class condition.

"We have many new members this year: Several among the military for whom we have made a special rate of \$10.00 a month, during the time that they are in uniform and/or among us.

"We have discontinued all social activities at the club and discontinued the dining room and the help that goes along with the maintenance of these two departments. We keep our grill open, and

(Continued on Page 42)

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**GET THOSE USED BALLS IN EARLY FOR REPROCESSING**

our former chef, whom we are fortunate to retain, provides us with sandwiches, soups and coffee, and is also in charge of the grill.

"We are fortunate in having the bus, which passes our club several times a day, by which means our employees and many of our members are able to reach the club without using their cars. I find also, the ever increasing desire on the part of members to share their cars, and I see many cars arriving at the club loaded to capacity. These things have all helped us get along better and get better acquainted."

### Time of Opportunity

★ A very healthy phase of golf club wartime operations is the recognition of war years as a time for demonstrating that the club can advance in making itself a substantial aid in the community's wartime activities.

This attitude is shown by the *Phoenix (Ariz.) CC.* Neil B. McGinnis is president of the club. The manager, since Oct., 1943, is Lloyd A. Snook, formerly manager of the old California CC, Culver City, Calif.

Snook tells how the Phoenix club has geared its operations to the wartime restrictions and how the club is going ahead. He says:

"Our activity is curtailed as to outside parties and hilarity. We do encourage our members to hold their luncheons, dinners and keep their interest at a high pitch and their response is strong. We have been very busy.

"Our Phoenix Open tournament was a huge success with the top-notch pros in attendance. This was a wonderful stimulant for the people here in Phoenix. After working in the aircraft factories, war plants, etc., they need to get out and see what these pros are doing in raising funds and getting bonds for the war effort.

"Our program is rather indefinite as to expansion, especially now. We have plans, though, after beating Tojo and Hitler of making this the outstanding club in the southwest.

"Our new terrace is to be remodeled, new fence around the course, locker rooms enlarged, kitchen renovated and in fact, a huge program is contemplated and all the directors are confident. Already, we have boosted our dues \$2.00 commencing the first of March, 1944, and not a single member complained or resigned, and that, mind you, is taking into consideration that the 20 per cent Federal Tax was added April 1st, 1944.

"Our food problem is not so serious here. We save our points, as other clubs do, but our supply is ample and we take care of our members in good style. No waste of food is allowed, butter is cut down to a minimum but they still come

out, hold their luncheons and attend our grand buffet dinners on Sunday evenings. One action that has helped the club in food conservation is the restriction of guests on Sunday evenings. Only the immediate family is allowed to come to the club on these nights. Who are in the immediate family is left to my discretion. At the present time, this policy has worked wonders and I try to help the members in every respect in bringing their families here. During the week, members may bring their guests and enjoy their club.

"We had a new winter membership that has been established this year. Heretofore, this club had six different types: To date, the membership types stand only as: Active (owning a share of stock); Junior and Army and Clergy which is only a temporary membership costing the usual monthly dues and no initiation fee. Of course, all outstanding Non-Resident, Associate members who have been in this club have the same privileges as before, but no new members. Prices of our shares of stock have increased and it is really difficult to obtain a share now in the club.

"Winter membership costs \$50.00 per month with golf course privileges only. Winter in Phoenix is grand; members from other clubs take advantage of this fine club and come here to spend weeks. I might also mention, at this time, that the club closes—that is the dining room is closed to parties, luncheons, etc.—during July, August and September. The weather really is a little too warm for much golf but that is where the swimming part of it comes in. When golf diminishes, the youngsters as well as the elders, come here in droves to cool off. So you see after all, we have a year around activity, regardless."

### Allen Opens Golf Business

Albert Allen, for 22 years with John Wanamaker's wholesale golf department and the past three years with Bailey, Allen and Izett, golf wholesalers, has opened his own business at rooms 633-34, 1011 Chestnut st., Philadelphia.

Allen now has the L. A. Young Golf Co. Walter Hagen line for Penna, Del., Md., N. J., D. C., Va., W. Va., and the Carolinas. He plans to add other lines.

### Women's Western Set Open and Amateur Dates

Women's Western Open championship will be played June 19-24 at the Park Ridge (Ill.) CC northwest of Chicago. The WWGA Amateur will be played at Onwentsia club, Lake Forest, Ill., Aug. 7-12.