

Lively Publicity Protects Against Slump

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THE coming season is going to be the real challenge to the golf pro, and he is going to need all the ideas that he can get.

We were in a rather enviable position with two large Army installations in our town. Our losses to the Armed Forces were pretty well replaced by members secured from the Officer personnel of these two installations. Actually our traffic was heavier than usual.

I do feel that we were extremely fortunate in having an alert and cooperative Board of Directors that made the Military memberships possible, and made any regulations that were necessary to make the club attractive to these men. I also feel that the heavy traffic from the Military forces acted as a magnet to the regular members, and soon they were using the club more than they normally did.

I equipped my shop with a number of better-than-ordinary sets of clubs for rentals, and made available inexpensive balls. I made it a point to greet each of these men where I could and gave freely any advice I could about their games. I tried to make them aware of me as pro and that I was interested in them and their games. It paid off in lessons, as 1943 was the best lesson year I have had at the club.

At the start of the season I had the same problem as all of the pros, and that was how far I could go with publicity. Some of the members thought that they would be criticized and called unpatriotic if their names appeared in golf articles, and while I did not subscribe to this thought I did have to consider it.

After some thought I decided that if I were to abide by their opinions I was going to be in for a pretty poor season, as I felt this was a year that I was going to need all of the outside help I could get. So with this thought in mind I set out to get all the publicity I could get and to use my own judgment as to whose names I could use, and the ones I could not. With this problem settled in my own mind I contacted a new sportswriter on one of the local papers and cultivated him.

We decided to use all of the pictures that we could run, and were very successful in this despite the shortage of space. These pictures proved so popular that we decided to go a little farther and run a column of golf incidents that happened in the every day golf games, other than tournaments. The column was called "Down the Fairway" and proved so popular that I began cutting it out of the paper and posting it on the bulletin board.

I might mention here the incidents and gossip that we used in this column were so commonplace that the average pro doesn't give them a second thought, but we found that the members were just as interested in what John Jones was doing as they were in Nelson, McSpaden and other bigs. After getting into this we ran into a number of oddities, some of which were picked up and carried by the A.P. In one instance the party named in the article received mail from all over the country. It is needless to say that he and his pals got a hell of a wallop out of that one.

I would like to suggest that the boys cultivate the sportswriters as they can do them a lot of good at this time, and if they happen to have one like Don Pierce, of the Topeka Daily Capital, it will be worth the effort.

My report wouldn't be complete if I didn't mention the part our greenkeeper, Ray Whitlow, played in making 1943 successful at the club. Despite the shortage of help and the inexperience of the help, Ray put his 27 years' experience to work and kept us playing a course that was in just as good condition as during normal times. I want to take my hat off to a fellow that can do that in face of the handicaps that he was faced with. In addition to this he planted and maintained a five acre Victory Garden for the club.

Pinehurst Tournaments Survive Another War Year

THE annual North and South golf championships will be held at the Pinehurst (N. C.) CC as usual.

The 42nd annual North and South open will be played over the championship course on March 14, 15, and 16. There will be no restriction on the age of entries. Last year only players over 38 years of age, or in the armed services were eligible. Old-timer Bobby Cruickshank was the winner.

The prize money will be \$3000, which will be used for the purchase of war bonds with a maturity value of \$4000.

The North and South Amateur championship has been set for April 10th through the 14th. It will be the 44th renewal of the event. The North and South Women's championship will be played from April 17th through April 21st.

Pinehurst golf officials believe that the North and South championships are now the oldest golf tournaments in the United States which have been held annually and without interruption.

The Pinehurst Seniors' championship, for golfers 55 years old and over, will be played from February 29th, through March 3rd.

TURN IN THOSE UNPLAYABLE BALLS