

# Association Reports Show Golf in Fighting Form

USGA, Chicago and Detroit Districts, Disclose Realistic Jobs in Meeting Wartime Trials.

**I**N NORMAL times value of amateur golf governing bodies often is questioned, mainly for a reason that actually reflects on the critics but that never reduces the criticism. These associations depend mainly on energetic cooperation of all interested, and when it is not forthcoming the potential job of the associations is bound to be restricted.

But in viewing the work of the associations during the war, even those who gave the bodies benefit of their criticism but not of their participation in labors, have been compelled to admit that the continued effort of the associations is doing a lot to keep the game together.

In the early months of 1942 authorities in golf expected that from 20% to 25% of the clubs would not go through the year. At the beginning of this year, as near as can be determined, fewer than five per cent of the clubs in operation in 1941 have given up. Definitely the courage of the associations had something to do with establishing the same sort of fight-it-out spirit that saved this country after being slugged at Pearl Harbor.

The USGA has been censured for its action in cancelling national tournaments. Popular vote still is against the USGA on this matter. But the USGA had to take action shortly after Pearl Harbor when it did look like absolutely everything not directly connected with war production effort would have to be abandoned in a desperate all-out struggle for national survival. So the USGA can say that if it did make a mistake it was a mistake made according to its honest, informed judgment as to what it could do to best and most realistically serve the country. And that sort of a mistake, USGA officials very frankly admit they'd make again—in case anybody wants to

label as a mistake an action taken in a sincere and unselfish action.

How unselfish, on a strictly commercial basis, the USGA action was may be seen from the USGA 1943 annual report which shows the association operating at a loss of \$6,951.43 with an income of \$19,668.95. In pre-war 1941 the USGA had an income of \$58,096.25 of which \$33,069.83 was from tournaments. That year the USGA had a net over operating expense of \$5,332.51. Despite the slump in income and the loss of USGA personnel now engaged in Army and Navy work, the association's Green Section work and its constant campaigning for golf club close participation in war work has kept up.

So the USGA abandonment of major championships probably doesn't rate as a factor injuring anybody or anything except the USGA financial statement.

Golf has to be realistic in admitting that its problems are not to be made a major worry while American men and women are risking and giving their lives in battle front, hence complaining against the USGA may be put in the category of the most popular of all national pastimes, merely bellyaching.

What the USGA and other golf associations did that was smart or lucky—or both—was to help keep the game going in order that it could prove its own wartime case. That golf has done better than its most passionate addicts could have imagined possible.

Without conscious pushing golf has demonstrated itself to be unquestionably one of the most valuable of wartime sports. It compensates for the intense, confined, artificial pressure and worry of wartime work. It gets them outside and gives them a change of pace, scenery and atmosphere, and keeps them in shape for

doing a job. The fact that some bums and loafers also play without earning the right by some war effort, is simply one of the aspects of American life to be accepted philosophically.

The USGA abandonment of tournaments also allowed an opportunity to demonstrate that there is a keen and growing appreciation of tournament golf and a genuine field for it despite the reduction in quality and quantity of fields while so many possible contestants are engaged in winning the war. The Detroit Ryder Cup matches, the Chicago District GA and George S. May tournaments and the highly successful events of this winter's circuit have given tournament golf the best demonstration of its basic attractiveness it possibly could have presented.

Like other wartime amusements tournament golf has benefited from workers having war plant salaries. Tournament golf the past two years unquestionably has made many new patrons who'll patronize postwar affairs.

This year the PGA championship may be renewed because of the vastly improved financial picture for sports events. Before the war there usually was trouble in locating a PGA national event due to its necessary financial guarantee and the fact that the title always rated second to the National Open title because of the field being restricted. This year with entertainment money being abundant the PGA championship should have a record draw unless adverse war news before and during the tournament hits the event.

But even in the case of the PGA operations the tournament in wartime is placed in the entertainment classification, and exhibitions and competitive events have been conducted as sideshows to bond and relief fund drives. In that matter the pro association has done a magnificent wartime job and the competing players who've been kept out of war work for valid reasons have worked hard and for comparatively small, or no net return in doing what they could do best in contributing to war financing.

The USGA annual report covering 1944 showed that in 10 sections there were many tournaments; in 24 few tournaments, and virtually no tournament scheduled in two sections.

The Women's Western and other women's associations did smart jobs of keeping tournament interest alive and keyed to war effort. Considering the en-

ergetic and extensive war work of women of the country club class of membership it's amazing that these women were able to crowd golf or golf tournaments in to maintain a logical balance of work and recreation.

The USGA's annual report showed the private golf club situation was strong in 27 sections, fair in 18 sections and poor in two sections. The public course situation, according to the USGA investigation, was good in 26 sections, fair in 19 sections and poor in two spots.

To show you what the USGA and other golf associations are up against in trying to form a solid golf front for wartime activities, only 483 golf outfits reported in the USGA survey to determine how much war relief organizations benefited from golf events. These reporting sources raised \$174,408.02 in 1943. As the reporting clubs were fewer than 10% of the nation's clubs, there might be fair basis for an estimate of over \$1,000,000 being contributed entirely by golf club affairs. The reported bond and stamp sales for the year were in excess of \$8,500,000. However, even though only fewer than 10% reported, it's a sure thing that the majority of clubs were stirred up by the continuous solicitation of associations to the extent of raising money for war work.

Furthermore, the golf clubs in extending use of their facilities to golfers of the armed forces, did an enthusiastic and successful job in fitting golf clubs into the wartime picture.

The USGA Green Section gearing to wartime conditions has been a substantial contribution to the maintenance of the game. What golfers generally don't realize is that the Green Section and green-keeper association work has been of tremendous value in the construction of warplane airports.

Representative of district association work during 1943 was activity of the Detroit and Chicago district associations among the many hard at work last year and continuing this year.

The Detroit report contained among other interesting references one to a survey of the district's courses as possible emergency fields for Army and Navy aircraft. About 50% of the district's clubs extended free playing privileges to servicemen. Another 30% extended privileges on a reduced fee basis and the remainder made their courses available at regular fees.



Lowell D. Rutherford, Chicago District's new president. A dynamic force in Chicago's outstanding wartime golf record.

In these two districts, as in others, the caddie situation received close attention, with the outcome being that there is developing a better and closer relationship between the clubs and caddies than ever before.

Also in both districts the Greens sections were more active than ever before in close association with greenkeepers who were doing phenomenal work under adverse conditions. The most extensive and closer cooperation between the club and greenkeeper organizations and members in both cities was credited as having been a 1943 development that showed positive benefits.

Detroit's Red Cross tournament raised over \$35,000 and the Chicago District GA through its Victory National tournament raised \$6,445 for servicemen's recreation. Through its Dime a Round campaign, an activity that should be widely copied, the CDGA raised more than \$10,000 for wartime organizations last year.

The CDGA local tournament schedule was maintained and fitted into the wartime working schedules of players. Much was done by the association's general counsel in connection with the effect of the 48 hour week on country clubs, workmen's compensation, federal taxation and state retailers' occupation tax matters.

In the cases of the two regional associations cited because their reports happen to be at hand, there was proof of the wisdom of the old American slogan: "united we stand; divided we fall."

Reports of all associations show slumps in membership slighter than most golfers would expect, but in view of the associations' constructive and vigorous performances last year you wonder if golf clubs aren't missing something very much worth while in wartime by not making association membership larger and cooperation with associations far more extensive and intensive.

## Iowa Authority Gives Course Care Tips

**H. L. LANTZ**, of Iowa State College, in his newsletter for greenkeepers, says: "This year there may be some easing up in the labor problem, depending upon local factors. The fertilizer problem appears to be equally acute as in 1943. No ammonium sulfate or ammonium nitrate is promised at this date.

"Our tests with various fertilizers on blue grass last season showed some interesting results. Soybean meal applied in the spring produced a noticeably greener grass in late August. The protein of soybean meal has to go through bacterial decomposition and be converted into soluble nitrate before the grass can use it. Last summer this process required around 4½ months. A similar application was made again in September. The results should be of interest next spring when growth is resumed. Grass fertilization to be effective on golf courses should promote early and lush growth during the fore part of the growing season so that the fairway sod may be thickened up and weeds 'squeezed out.' Soybean meal appears to have considerable promise, but of course it will not be available for some time, since it is in great demand as feed at this time.

"The problem of greens fertilization during 1944 will keep greenkeepers busy. An organic fertilizer such as Milorganite will do a lot of good if used correctly. There are times during the growing season, however, when greens need a 'shot-in-the-arm,' a fertilizer which is immediately available to the grass.

"During the past two seasons, on account of labor shortage, top-dressing on a number of golf courses was abandoned, or

the number of applications was reduced. The lack of top-dressing may lead to serious trouble. Most competent greenkeepers recommend at least four top-dressings during the growing season. If a top-dressing soil is not prepared in advance, a good sandy loam may be used. A good mixture used by some greenkeepers consists of 2/3 soil plus 1/3 horticultural peat. To this may be mixed the required amount of Milorganite, phosphorous and potash for the first spring application. After that, leave out the phosphorous and potash until the September application. The application of phosphorous and potash in the spring and fall promotes good growth and sturdy grass. Good greens usually follow a wise application of fertilizers, top-dressing and fungicides. No one of these three items can long be neglected. If these procedures are followed and failure follows, this means that it is time to examine the drainage and aeration of the soil.

"Machinery is a headache. Many of our fairway and greens mowers were pretty well worn when the war started. Every effort should be made to put these machines in as good condition as possible by the first of April. It would be wise to order additional parts to make quick replacements when breakdowns occur during this coming season.

"The need for Victory gardens is as urgent as it was last year and the demand for garden space will be as great or greater. No doubt many golf clubs will again cooperate to make land available for member participation in the food for victory campaign."