

# Swope Park Cordial To Servicemen Golfers

By OLIVE M. RAILSBACK

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★ KANSAS CITY CAN tell you, from its experience, that golf has a prominent place in the recreation of servicemen in the United States or overseas. Many of our boys overseas have no opportunities to play, but they still want to hear about what's going on at the courses at home and learn with delight that the places where they used to play are being kept up in good shape to welcome them when they return.

During the three golf years since the war started we in Kansas City have done our best to extend our most cordial golfing hospitality to golfers who are at military installations in this area, and to keep in touch with our own district's golfers who are in armed service.

Our city was quick to extend free golf at its Swope Park courses to men and women in uniform. Their grateful acceptance of what we were glad to present to them does not support the statement of an eastern park official who questioned that free public golf for men in military service would be used enough to make it worth while.

Early in 1942, before he left for the armed forces, my husband, Harry Railsback, supt. and pro in charge at the Swope Park Municipal courses, recommended to John A. Moore, President of the Board of Park Commissioners, that free golf be granted to service men at the two city-owned courses.

Since that time over 5,000 enlisted men have enjoyed the privilege of playing free at these courses. Golf clubs and balls are rented for the day at a nominal fee and very few have missed the opportunity of transportation to and from the nearest carline, as the players are quick to pick up a man in uniform.

Each incident of this kind has a story. For instance: One day a lonely sailor walked over to the No. 1 Course to play, and a member who has three boys in service offered him a ride back to the carline. The sailor has been stationed at a nearby naval base for over a year, and since that particular day he has spent every week-end with the member, who gave him one of his son's rooms in his home. They play golf together all day every Sunday.

"A soldier who was attending a radio school here for three months was so impressed with the fact that he could play a beautiful course free of charge that he sent home for his clubs and spent every spare minute playing golf here. He asked to be put on the Swope Park Golf News list, which consisted at that time of 20 Swope Park members who were in the armed forces. It has grown to over 100 in a year. Each month, a copy of my little paper finds its way to our own boys all over the world, and their letters, plus the out-of-town soldiers' letters, are received almost daily, full of thanks and admonitions to 'keep it coming'. The strange soldier, who is now one of us, says when the war is over he is going to move his family to Kansas City.

"Other golf courses in Kansas City quickly adopted Swope Park's plan to give golf to service men, Stayton Meadows GC and Ivanhoe GC waive the fee. Oakwood G&CC allows service men the privilege of the course if they come with a member. Armour Fields GC, St. Andrews GC and Quivira GC charge a green fee but they furnish clubs free. Victory Hills GC waives the fee to former members who have been overseas. Indian Hills G&CC allows service men who were former members or friends of members to play without charge. Mission Hills G&CC allows 28 service men per week to play free, furnishing them with clubs which are left in the golf shop by members for that purpose. Mission Hills has also sent several sets of clubs to the Kansas City Canteen for the use of service men who care to use them. Special rates are given to men in service at Milburn G&CC and at Hillcrest GC.

The American War Dads, now a national organization, was founded in Kansas City, and their first chance to raise money for the Kansas City Canteen was by co-sponsoring with the PGA, a golf exhibition featuring Bing Crosby, Lawson Little, Ed Dudley, and John Goodman, at Swope Park, September 16, 1942, proceeds netting \$1,500.00. Harry Railsback arranged the exhibition with Fred Corcoran, PGA tournament manager. The Board of Park Commissioners gave the use of Swope Park; the War Dads sold

the tickets; the Kansas City Canteen received the money, and the gallery enjoyed a good show.

The Kansas City Golf Assn. has been sponsoring Red Cross Tournaments which are held at member clubs twice each month. Each player drops a "Buck in the Bucket", which is the entry fee. During 1943, \$1,200.00 was raised and the goal for 1944 is \$2,400.00 (\$1,060.00 to date), towards the purchase of a Disaster Unit to be donated to the Red Cross.

Recently, C. E. McBride, Sports Editor of the Kansas City Star, received a letter from Capt. Jack Launder, disabled veteran at the Oliver General Hospital in Augusta, Ga., asking if something could be done through Mr. McBride's column toward getting used golf clubs and balls for the convalescent soldiers there, as there was a course on the grounds owned by the government. The government had hired Mickey Gallagher as the golf pro, but there were not enough golf clubs to go around. Mr. McBride quoted Capt. Launder's letter in his column, with some forceful comments of his own, and Kansas City golfers immediately responded with donations of over 500 golf clubs, 60

bags and 100 extra putters, which were sorted and shipped by Lowe & Campbell Div., Wilson Sporting Goods Co.

To get used balls for these boys, Les Freeburg, Wilson's City Manager, suggested that at each Red Cross Tournament every player should drop a ball in a bucket. This was approved and sponsored by the Kansas City Golf Assn., and up to the present over 300 balls have been sent to the Oliver General Hospital. The KCGA Breakfast Club, a smaller group of golfers at Hil'crest GC, have adopted the plan and have sent several dozen balls with more to follow every two weeks.

Golfers in Kansas City are very happy about the way the good fellowship of the game is a strong factor in preserving a home-tie with our men who are away and in contributing to their high morale, with pleasant thoughts of happy days that they enjoyed on Kansas City courses—happy days that will return, we pray, soon. And Kansas City golfers are happy too that the friendly spirit of the game has enabled us to extend our hospitality to those in the armed service who are stationed in or near our city.

## Iowa Greenkeepers Re-elect

By H. L. LANTZ

THIRTY-SEVEN MEN of the Iowa Greenkeepers Assn. attended a one-day session on June 20. This meeting, held at Des Moines, drew greenkeepers from Dubuque, Davenport, Muscatine, Council Bluffs and Fort Dodge and from towns closer in. Why do they come? The answer probably lies somewhere near a central fact that these boys know that the programs for the meetings are planned to give constructive information. For example, Pres. Wm. Keating and Sec. Ted Adams arranged several practical demonstrations. At the Waveland GC, Ted demonstrated the use of a syphon-proportioner in applying ammonium sulfate quickly and without burning. Ted also showed how to use a scarifier blade on the greens mowers once every week or ten days to prevent matting and to reduce the need of too frequent top-dressings. Extra top dressings cost money these days when labor is short. The care, adjustment and maintenance of old machinery was discussed and proved to be of general interest.

Dinner was served at the Des Moines G&CC. This was the annual meeting. President Bill Keating presided. The nominating committee which recommended retention of present officers. Those re-elected were: Pres. Wm. Keating, Des Moines G&CC; V. P., E. F. Johnson, Iowa State College course, Ames; Sec.-Treas. T. E. Adams, Waveland course, Des Moines.

Bill and Ted are not far apart and can work together easily. This close association of its key officers is a big factor in the success of the Iowa Greenkeepers Association. Ted Adams' treasurers report showed a goodly balance in the treasury.

H. L. Lantz, in charge of the cooperative experimental turf garden, gave a brief report on the bent grass work at Ames. He also outlined some experiments in weed control through the use of Ammate (DuPont). Preliminary experiments at the Ames G&CC gave 90 to 95 percent kill of dandelion and plantain. In these tests,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound per gallon gave as good results as  $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds per gallon. Ammate dissolves readily and is sprayed on the weedy areas. Following the use of this chemical, the spray equipment must be thoroughly cleansed.

Following the noon meeting, some played golf and the others followed Bill Keating around the course, in a study of greens construction, disease control, fertilizer discussions, and watering. This golf course lies comparatively high, is well drained, and had suffered little from the great rains this spring. Bill has 18 perfect greens, all Metropolitan. He believes in and practices frequent topdressing. The topdressing consists of equal parts sandy loam, sand and peat. This year four applications of topdressing have been applied. Brown patch and dollar spot were being kept under near perfect control by Thiosan applied at the rate of two pounds per 6000 square feet.