

Veterans' Aid Keeps Golf Busy

GOLF COURSES at military hospitals have proved in the eyes of the soldiers and sailors, military medical authorities, the public, and newspapers, by far the most important wartime activity of golf. The courses and putting greens are highly popular with the wounded servicemen. Pros and greenkeepers have been diligent in providing these facilities.

A pioneer in this work is Judge Earl F. Tilley of Chicago, widely known to pros and amateurs for his productive devotion to the game's development. The Judge early in 1942 recalled that there had been a fine practice green at the Chicago Beach hotel before it was converted into the Gardner General hospital. He personally purchased the necessary bent sod, and with the help of Chuck Tanis, pro at Olympia Fields CC, and a veteran of World War I, and aided by some local greenkeepers, the green was restored. More than 100 putters and 400 golf balls were collected in the Chicago district for use by the military hospital patients as a result of the Judge's one man drive. The work was highly commended by Army brass.

Almost every week sees further action by amateurs and pros in extending golf facilities at military hospitals.

Among late news in this field is word from Seneca Falls, N. Y., where the Central NY PGA, headed by George McLean is sponsoring a fund-raising drive, with amateurs, for construction of a \$20,000 course at the Rhodes General Hospital at Utica. Eddie Kuhn, chairman of the Central NY rehabilitation committee; Bill Mitchell, Emmett Kelly and Milt Theobald, together with prominent central New York men and women amateurs, are prime movers in the drive.

The PGA role in the national campaign was proposed and pushed by Leo Diegel and other Philadelphia district pros and greenkeepers who collaborated in a model job for the Valley Forge General hospital.

In Texas Larry Nabholtz and Lt. Ben Hogan, who got a 10 day leave from the

Fort Worth Army air field for this job, have worked out the plans for the Ashburn General hospital course at McKinney. The Open at Dallas last fall raised \$24,000 which will be spent in building a watered 9-hole 3400 yard, par 35 course; a 30-hole putting green, a 25-tee driving range and a golf shop.

As the Ashburn course is for use of convalescing personnel there will be no steep banks to tees or greens and the traps will be flat. The putting course and driving range will be lighted for night play.

But this business of financing and building the courses isn't the entire job. The pros are giving instruction and exhibitions at the hospital courses. There hasn't been much said about this, and that is very much to the credit of the pros who realize that any inconvenience or expense to which they are put in presenting these shows is not to be compared with the payment the wounded veterans have made.

Gene Kessler in his widely-read sports column in the Chicago Times tells about this lesser known part of the pro entertainment of wounded veterans. Said Kessler:

"We spent several days with a troupe of professional athletes who are going all-out to entertain wounded war veterans in government hospitals throughout the country. They are the traveling golfers, and since golf has been found by physicians to have a therapeutic value especially adapted to most veteran's cases, these swing men of the tee league are accentuating the positive.

"At Miami Biltmore hospital, for instance, thousands of wounded veterans cheered when Craig Wood slammed the pill 296 yards to win a driving contest from Sammy Snead, By Nelson and Sammy Byrd. They forgot their pains when Nelson gave a demonstration of various shots, how to approach in the wind, etc., and when Tony Penna illustrated the pitch shot from the edge of the green of their hospital course. They

cheered again when Jug McSpaden, while giving them a lesson in putting, sank a 35-footer, similar to the one he dropped on the 18th green at Edgewater a year ago to tie Lt. Ben Hogan in the Victory Open.

"As soon as the pros had finished their show, these crippled heroes were out with clubs—clubs contributed by players throughout the country—practicing what they had seen. Boys in wheel chairs were trying to putt, leaning from their seat to manipulate the stick. Others with crutches began swinging clubs.

"And the pros—men whose names fill sports headlines—stayed to give them

private lessons; lessons which cost members of swanky clubs plenty.

"That was the fifty-first hospital these pro golfers had visited this year. The very next day, a group journeyed to Key West to put on a similar show for wounded sailors in the naval hospital at that tropical base. While participating in the four-ball tourney at Miami Springs, these pro athletes visited five hospitals in the specific area.

"On their way north to Charlotte, N. C., they stopped at the big hospital in Augusta, Ga. When they reach Chicago the last week in June for the National Victory Open, they will then visit Illinois hospitals.

WHY POSTWAR GOLF BOOM IS CERTAIN

By GEORGE McLEAN

THAT golfing will have increased popularity and growth after the war seems self-evident. If we examine the pattern following the World War I, it seems to us there are certain factors that will implement this enlarged number of players, in addition to the anticipated increase expected from our returned soldiers.

War causes large migrations of population from country to city. There isn't a manufacturing center of any consequence in these United States that hasn't shown some increase in population. In many cities, there is an acute shortage of homes. Perhaps the best evidence that many of these people are expected to remain in urban centers is the billion dollar nationwide housing project announced recently.

Urban society will assimilate this new increment. We would not contemplate that any considerable part of these new city dwellers will turn to golf for recreation, but we do believe that some of those who like the better things of life, will ultimately take up the game. They will be influenced by the enthusiasm of their golfing neighbors.

We all know any number of potential golf enthusiasts who have had the desire to play but whose financial situation precluded this form of recreation. The stabilization of wages in the last decade and the increased earning power of the individual will tend, we believe, to bring this latent ambition into fruition.

And after the war we may be certain of a great increase in automobile transportation, which of course, will be a factor in the expansion of golf. Furthermore, the strain of day and night work in wartime and the constant burden of wartime worries, will naturally call for a

compensating relief and rebuilding when the time is right. That, too, is going to assure a vast and natural increase in golf.

That the period following the war will be years of general prosperity seems assured. The whole world is in such dire need of manufactured goods, medicine, food, housing, etc., that one doesn't need be a student of economy to vision an era of abundance ahead.

How much the professional golfers will cash in on this impending prosperity is pretty much up to the individual. If we have established the point that golf may anticipate many new converts, it is equally evident these embryo golfers will require equipment and apparel. Moreover, a substantial portion of present-day golfers will need to renew some of their equipment and attire.

That the efficiently conducted professionals' shop is a natural, as first source of supply for golf equipment, is not debatable. Sober thought, however, forces the conclusion that not all shops have earned this consideration. If the following observations, while provocative, may result in some improvement of conditions, we feel the profession as well as the individual will have benefited.

Every professional has visited, at one time or another, shops of brother pros that were in a wild state of confusion. The merchandise they had on hand was thrown about, oftentimes dirty, and frequently the assistant was indifferent and uninformed. No one will argue a basic feature of pro golf merchandising is to display the merchandise attractively and keep it clean.

Secondly: The assistant in the shop should have some knowledge of the article he is selling other than price if he is to