

great was the demand for memberships, despite the increase in tax (which some thought might discourage membership).

Private clubs report a healthier financial condition, virtually no bad accounts, and great hope for the year 1945.

The public courses enjoyed an increase in play during 1944, and virtually regained their pre-war popularity. Memberships were up, too, at the muni clubs, and membership chairmen predict record memberships for 1945.

Despite labor shortages, condition of the courses seems to be as good as ever. Actually, there have been fewer complaints about the greens and fairways during 1944 than there were before the labor shortage. This may be due, however, to the attitude of the player, who recognizes the hardships under which the management is laboring, and refrains from voicing vain squawks.

You might say that golf in Kentucky is booming and everybody is happy—except the professional.

The pro's outlook for 1945 is very gloomy.

On top of the acute shortage of balls has come at last a dearth of clubs. The pros find themselves in a position of having to depend on lessons and other services to substitute for the ball and club sales.

The pros also see in the shortage of clubs a very direct loss to golf in that new players—beginners, who have completed lessons and are ready to take up the sport—can find no clubs and may lose interest before clubs are available.

Louisville has felt the shortage of balls more than some other cities, perhaps, because of heavy G. I. play. Of club members the pros have demanded a trade-in with each purchase of a ball. But the servicemen have had no old balls to trade in, and naturally the pros have let them have new ones without this formality. This has contributed much to the shortage.

In an effort to save play on one of the largest public courses—Seneca—Pro Oscar Widmer has decided to discontinue sales altogether, and to form a rental pool of those balls he has left. He also plans to pool all of his remaining club stock and make up rental sets for his new pupils and players.

## West Penn Builds Army Hospital Course

By I. W. DANFORTH

Sec., Western Pennsylvania Golf Assn.

★ WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA GA conducted its usual Western Pennsylvania Amateur championship in September at the Westmoreland CC and conducted the Junior Championship in June at the Shannopin CC. All other events were postponed until after the war.

We regard our most important work in 1944 that of the contribution the golfers of Western Pennsylvania made to the Deshon General Hospital at Butler, Pa. Through a solicitation carried on by members of all clubs of this association we have raised \$20,500, and have completed construction of a 9-hole course at the hospital. The Army authorities were successful in acquiring 16 acres adjacent to the hospital and we were given only the amount of land on which to construct nine holes. The property is very well suited for nine holes which range from 100 to 150 yards in length. The entire property was plowed and seeded. The greens are actually the same as would be used on a championship course. We also have been able to build unusually large elevated tees.

The construction was completed in November of this year and we are looking forward to opening the course for some 1300 army men who have nearly all been returned from foreign service. The opening will depend a great deal on weather conditions but should not be later than April 1, 1945.

## New York District In Better Shape in 1944

By SHEPARD BARNES

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★ MY IMPRESSION is that there was considerably more play in the New York metropolitan district in 1944 than there was in 1943 or 1942. Adjustment has been made to wartime conditions. Members and clubs after three years under the self-imposed restrictions of the times, as well as observing the government regulations, have fitted golf properly into their plans to contribute toward victory.

Clubs that were able to continue in operation generally improved their financial condition. Increased membership resulted from closing of clubs distant from transportation, wartime increase in national income, and, in numerous cases medical advice to preserve wartime working capacity by outdoor recreation balance.

Public and fee courses also showed signs of greater play than in preceding war years.

The caddie shortage was acute in this district as it probably was elsewhere. However, in view of the hardships endured by men on our fighting fronts, even golfers who used to say they'd give up the game rather than carry their own clubs were not disposed to make further public confession of their unwillingness to undergo such a trying ordeal. Many of them carried their own clubs and in spite of normal grumbling, managed to survive the labor. Even some of the most irritable became disposed to admit that packing their own clubs possibly was