

# MIAMI COUNTRY CLUB MAKES ITS SPENDING PAY

FLORIDA'S oldest existing golf club, the Miami CC, has started its 47th year with substantial evidence that golf in Florida, despite its spectacular record, is just coming into its biggest years.

Under the leadership of a dynamic and ageless veteran Ralph Y. Pool, the Miami CC recently has bought its 132 acre plant from the Florida East Coast Hotel Co., paying \$175,000 for the hotel company's equity. The club now has a closed roster of 450 members and a waiting list. Gross income for the year ending March 31, 1945 was \$73,580 against \$45,800 for the year previous. Net profit was \$31,837.88. Green-fee income from 39,727 non-member rounds (including 5,275 servicemen's rounds) last fiscal year was \$66,677.

The club will be host to the Miami \$10,000 open next winter and to the \$7,500 International Four-ball. It has been assured the first Florida State amateur to be held after the war.

The comeback of the club during the seven years of the Pool administration has been one of the outstanding stories of the golf business. Notwithstanding the tremendous advertising given Miami by its golf courses and golf events, the Country Club had rough going without any appreciable help at critical periods from the city authorities. Although only 10 minutes from the heart of Miami the Country club was in a bad slump when Pool first became president. In 1939 Pool got the members to approve a \$10,000 improvement program. The next year the improvement ante was hiked to \$20,000. In 1941 the program of betterment called for an expenditure of \$25,000. That money was quickly forthcoming because of the great results and returns of the previous improvement budgets.

Just as soon as conditions permit after the war the club will spend another \$25,-

000 on improvements. Among the work ahead is rebuilding of six greens for which M. O. Penton, chairman of the green committee, already has detailed plans; an addition to the locker-room, and a new lounge for women.

Originally the Miami CC course was a 9-hole layout operated for guests of the Royal Palm hotel. Players came to the club by boats on the Miami river or by tallyho. Hurricanes, bank failures, the collapse of the super-super Florida land boom, and two world wars didn't put the club out of the running. Since 1924 the club has presented more than \$100,000 in amateur prizes to golfers who came from all over the nation (even California) to play at this center of golf enthusiasm.

Now the city administration is conscious of the great promotion job the club has done for the community. City Mgr. A. B. Curry named Pool chairman of the Four-ball last winter and for the Four-ball and \$10,000 Open next winter. After that other Miami golf leaders will serve in rotation as chairmen and the tournaments will be placed at other clubs in the area.

At the club's recent annual meeting Herbert Sawyer, after lauding the work Pool and his co-workers on the board had done in strengthening the club, presented the organization with one of the historic items of Florida golf. It was a midiron out of the set of five clubs owned by J. Hamilton Gillespie, who was responsible for what some declare was the first golf course in the U. S.

The course was that at Sarasota which was built in 1885 on land that now is part of Sarasota's business section. J. Hamilton Gillespie was son of the founder of Sarasota, Sir John Gillespie. The son's clubs were presented by his widow to Mr. Sawyer.

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