



Camp Bowie Golf Team for the Eighth Service Command Army Service Forces Golf Championship. Practice Green and club house at Camp Bowie in background. Left to right: Col. Clifford C. Whitney, S/Sgt. John Bizilo, Sgt. Clarence Royals, Sgt. Edgar Ware, Pfc. Leny Calderwood, professional.

No "Cease Firing" Order for Army Golf Here

By **PFC. LENY CALDERWOOD**

Pro, Camp Bowie (Tex.) Army Golf Course

WE HAVE READ a lot about the big part that golf will play in the reconditioning and rehabilitation of the returning battle casualties. We already have had time to prove that golf is, without a doubt, one of the best means of restoring health to the wounded and sick. We also know that nearly every general hospital in this country has either built its own golf course or has acquired access to one.

But the Camp Bowie golf club that has now been in existence three years is playing a double role in this war, due mainly to an Army Colonel of the Veterinary Corps, who, as far back as 1942 when nearly everything pertaining to the war effort pointed toward a gloomy outlook for golf, was foresighted enough to see the big advantage of the game as a morale builder as well as being a wonderful means of physical exercise for the soldier.

Camp Bowie, just on the outskirts of Brownwood, Tex., was a new camp and more land was needed for maneuvering and training purposes. When the government condemned for purchase some 120,-

000 acres of adjoining land, the camp commander was confronted with the problem of what to do with the old Brownwood CC property which now was within the boundary of the reservation.

It would take money to continue to operate the club and golf course, and that had not been provided for by the War Department. If the club could just continue on without any trouble or expense to either the camp or the government, that would be the answer.

Golfing Colonel in Charge

Fortunately there was an officer on the post who could do the job, due to a great deal of experience in managing army courses in this country, the Philippines, and Panama, and who was whole-heartedly of the belief that golf should be continued as a means of lightening the war-time strain on both the soldier and the civilian worker. The club was turned over to Col. Clifford C. Whitney, camp veterinarian. He is a tall, slightly gray fellow with a perpetual suntan from various out-of-door activities and 27 years with the service

as a cavalryman, and a man with a warm handshake and a pleasant smile for all he meets.

Col. Whitney, who, incidentally has scored five aces in his golfing career with but one recorded in the United States, immediately set up plans for the running of the club. These plans worked so well from the start that there has been very little alteration. His idea at the outset was to make the club a recreational center for the community of Brownwood and the military personnel of Camp Bowie.

His first act was to form a council, consisting of three military officers and two civilian members of the old Brownwood CC, to meet once a month and approve all operational procedure and to discuss any new problems.

The Colonel's next step was to obtain a pro, and I can say here that the Colonel is one of the most pro-minded club operators I've ever met. Unlike many, he always discusses first any club problems with the professional, for to him the pro is the golf doctor whether it's to teach the game or whether it is to install a new shower in the locker room.

I met Col. Whitney a couple of weeks after he had taken over when I had heard about the club and went out for a round of G. I. golf. After we had matched strokes, he asked me about taking the duties as army professional at the club. Two days later I came out to help on the new project.

I can't say that everything has been easy. Many times things have come up, excluding financial troubles, that seemed would spell the end for the Camp Bowie golf club. But always, the Colonel would show by our records of military play that golf was so important as a recreational feature that we should and must carry on.

Plan Makes Good

The plan that has worked so successfully is different from that of any other set-up. It is even different from the clubs operated by other army posts. All play is at a very nominal fee, this fee only because the club must be self-supporting. The Brownwood CC had 64 members originally. Civilian membership in the Camp Bowie club is limited to that 64, and another civilian member can only be taken in when one drops out. At present there is a waiting list of a dozen applications.

Any military officer may automatically become a member upon application. The officer or enlisted man may play on a daily fee of 50c per day, or the enlisted man may buy a green fee privilege card for \$3.60 per month. I might add here that the enlisted man is excluded regular club membership, because the club house facilities are just not large enough to take care of the big demand.

On this basis the club has functioned

throughout the war without any outside help, and has provided one of the better recreational spots in this area.

G. I. Joe has spent many hours playing golf over the sporty 18-hole grass green course during the few hours he had off while in Camp Bowie training for overseas combat duty. Records show nearly 15,000 rounds of military golf per year. Any number of letters have been received from the boys after leaving this camp. All are unanimous in their praise. Pvt. Roger Richards, of Chicago, writes back, "Keep up the good work that you are doing. I miss playing golf so much since I left Camp Bowie. It's the best morale-lifter that I know."

The club has sponsored several tournaments for the uniformed golfers. A year ago a \$750.00 war bond tournament was staged for all military personnel on the post. The prizes were all paid for by the club with accumulated funds. The sale of war bonds in connection with the event totaling over \$14,000.00. There was everything to go with the tourney for their enjoyment; Calcutta pool and a good old-fashioned Texas barbecue cooked just outside the club house. In June of the past year the Eighth Service Command Army Service Forces Golf Tournament attracted over 200 officers and enlisted men from Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, to the Bowie club. The players were rationed and quartered at the Regional Hospital a few blocks away, and the entire event didn't cost them a cent.

Post-war Service Valuable

Now that the victory is ours, the second phase of the double duty role is already functioning and playing a big part in the rehabilitation of the returning veterans. Green fee privilege cards have been printed and are being issued free to all overseas veterans and convalescents at the Regional Hospital here. Any officer or soldier is eligible for free play as long as he is convalescing, or any foreign service man is entitled to up to 90 days play without charge. At this writing 354 of these cards have been issued.

The wartime golf activities of this club have settled any argument in my mind as to the future of golf. I have taught and seen more people take up the game in the short time that I have been here than at any other comparable period in my 18 years as a golf professional. It has, without a doubt, attracted more army wives than any other sport. And just one more thing, the soldiers who have fought our battles are not going to be penned up too much inside, but are going to require more time out in the open and that's going to mean more golf.

In the not too far-away future the Camp Bowie GC will most likely revert back to the Brownwood CC.