

Watson Tells of Houston Municipal Golf Boom

Texas, with its star pros and its galaxy of talented men and women amateurs including Mildred (Babe) Zaharias, the Women's National champion, also has plenty to talk about in private and public course operation.

In Houston, for instance, Hugh Watson, city golf manager, heads one of the most active, expertly-conducted municipal golf programs in the country. Hugh was pretty well swamped by wartime work but now both of his boys have returned from the Navy, and he has time to tell what's doing in Houston muny golf.

Writes Hugh Watson:

"Here is a comparison of this year and last, through the first 8 months of this year, January through August.

"This year looks like it will be a record breaker for both rounds and money collected in green fees. Most large cities in Texas have a larger green fee than the 50¢ charged in Houston.

"All 3 of our City courses are operated by 5 men on each course, but I have the promise of 8 men for each course next year. My annual budget for all 3 courses is less than any one of the 4 country clubs. Our private clubs are very efficiently and well maintained.

"The City of Houston has just voted 90 millions in bonds, and it looks like we will get another golf course started in 1947.

"Houston is now the largest city in the South, and growing fast, so we will need at least 3 more golf courses to take care of the 21,000 municipal golfers now on hand and coming. We have about 2000 Negro golfers in the city and we must build them a course next year. They are certainly entitled to a place to play and I have asked for a 9 hole course to start with, with room for another 9 holes later if needed.

"There was organized this summer 6 boys (under 17) teams from each of the golf courses in the city.

"Our annual high school team play has



Hugh Watson, Houston Golf Manager.

started. Six boys from each of the 10 high schools line up for match play with the finals coming the early part of next year.

"Our annual city-wide boys tournament will be held again this coming spring, which in the past has been sponsored by the Houston Junior Chamber of Commerce.

"Our city-wide championship tournament for 1946 was held last month at Hermann Park with 386 players. Ed White was the champion for the 4th straight year.

"The Annual Bond tournament has started on the Hermann Park and Memorial Park courses. This tournament is so large (759 last year) it has to be run on two separate courses, with the finalist at each course playing the finalist on the 36 hole route, with 18 at each course. Two weeks to qualify, two weeks for the first and second match, and one week thereafter. This type of tournament gives the working man a chance to play without taking time out from his job. It is strictly a week-end tournament.

"We have a municipal women's organization with over 100 members, playing each week, alternating from course to course."

Rounds Played	1946	1945	Gain
Hermann Park	60,142	48,426	11,716
Memorial Park	41,220	27,733	13,487
Glenbrook Park	12,325	4,584	7,741
	113,687	80,743	32,944
Fees Collected			Gain
Hermann Park	\$30,882.75	\$23,665.25	
Memorial Park	\$21,678.25	\$13,945.00	
Glenbrook Park	\$ 6,139.00	\$ 2,258.00	
	\$58,700.00	\$39,868.25	\$18,831.85