



The Orleans Country Club looking from the first green toward the clubhouse. The two players at the left are on the 7th fairway. At the right is the fourth hole. Members can sit on the porch of the clubhouse and see all of the flags except No. 6, a dogleg in deep woods.

Little Club Looms Large as Community Asset

By TOM THOMAS

Even Walter Hagen who was a great hand at the pleasant perjuries wouldn't have said the Orleans (Vt.) CC 9-hole course is "one of the finest little courses I've ever played." Its trapping is old-fashioned and the layout is flat. And the most generous cheerful flatterer among course superintendents wouldn't declare the course a model of turf condition. But Hagen and the superintendent would have a swell time at the place and marvel that for the money spent the Orleans club does so well in providing golf and golf clubhouse facilities to a small community. Little by little, but soundly in the conservative New England manner, the Orleans club is growing.

Why and how it has continued to operate and grow when the war knocked out many a small club whose young people had left for military service, is told by the club's sec., Hazen E. Converse. It has happily included what other small clubs must adopt of necessity—an entertainment program that has been signally successful in fitting into the warm, big-hearted friendliness of American villages and old-fashioned families.

Converse points out that Orleans' 151 members have a merry family spirit that is a very effective substitute for a lack of money required to operate on the standard of larger communities.

For instance, Converse points out that only \$568.75 was paid out for maintenance in 1946, and the previous year a hundred dollars less. Either amount is only large enough to tide many clubs over a weekend. The answer at Orleans is member interest and cooperation. Orleans possesses plenty of it. Archie Kipp, for example—he's the club president—has taken care of the fairways himself for the past three years because he loves to ride the club "tractor", which everyone refers to affectionately as the "Alice A. Doodlebug".

As Hazen puts it, "Up to 1943 we had a real tractor, but that summer it played out on us. One of the pistons got sick of being confined and came out. It looked like a major catastrophe to us, until with the trading ability of President Archie and the mechanical ingenuity of Arthur Stannard, we got a 1928 Chevy and converted it. Archie immediately fell for the doodlebug, as he named it, and she was his baby from that moment."

From then on Archie looked after the fairways and put them into such condition that he went out and broke his all-time record, scoring a 73, and chalking up a 34 for nine holes, his very best. Archie says he is on speaking acquaintance with every blade of grass and hump in the course and so he can't help but lower his score. He lays it all to Alice A.

Home-style Entertainment

Although the war years were tough on other clubs, they only served to reinforce the bond of fellowship that holds together the Orleans club. When the gasoline shortage prevented people from traveling afar in search of social doings, the club started Wednesday night suppers for the men that were cooked by members of the club. On Saturday nights other suppers were given for both men and women members. The ladies each brought a pot of beans, a salad or a pie and the club furnished coffee and rolls. There was no charge to anyone bringing food, and the idea attracted 40-60 people every time. The enthusiasm and fun of the members soon became well known and membership started to swell.

Some of those dinners must have been wonderful. Hazen relates, "Archie and Roy Bean put on the Wednesday night suppers to which the men were all invited. If any of the boys in service had ever eaten one of the broiled chickens prepared by those two, they'd have flown clear across the Pacific for a second helping. Archie and Roy served not only broiled chicken, but lobster, clams, hash, hamburgers, fish chowder, and even baked salmon. The ladies put on their potluck every Saturday night and the income from those two weekly affairs earned the club \$175 and kept it solvent".

When times grew hard in the war years everyone was wondering how the little club could continue, until ten members offered to construct a Victory Garden. They plowed up ground back of the ninth tee, and in spite of ribbing by people who doubted any of the 10 knew enough to raise a carrot, they were immensely successful. But let Hazen tell it.

"We raised 70 bushels of the nicest potatoes that anyone ever ate, 15 bushels of corn, and all the smaller varieties of garden vegetables. I tenderly cared for a long row of radishes. It wasn't until long past radish season that I discovered I'd been nurturing chickweed. But my cucumbers were the best of the lot. My turnips were fine, too, and I'd have had enough to put some up over the winter if Roy and Archie hadn't robbed the plot for a New England Boiled Dinner they put on one Wednesday night."

What makes Hazen and his fellows most proud about their club is its complete absence of any clique. The better players golf with the poorest ones and all have a swell time. If there are two foursomes or eight people teeing off, the players all toss coins to see who will play with whom. Everybody enjoys himself. If a stranger drives up, somebody immediately makes his acquaintance and invites him to join the group, even if it makes a fivesome of a foursome. Folks at Orleans are friendly.

The nine hole course of 3,015 yards has

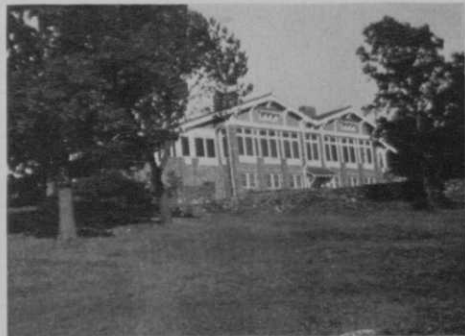
its greens and fairways in good condition considering its meager budget. Greens are mowed 2 or 3 times weekly by a man who lives on a small farm beside the course. Both greens and fairways have been seeded and fertilized this past year. Springs in the hill behind the clubhouse furnish water for drinking and for watering the greens in dry weather.

The latest treasurer's report showed that all the Orleans club's bills were paid, the mortgage retired, and the treasury left with a balance at the end of 1946 of \$431.17. The report reveals only \$20.00 of unpaid dues.

Dues at Orleans are at the irreducible minimum. A few years ago when money was scarce the club drastically reduced them. Members wisely preferred three persons paying \$10.00 a head to one member paying \$25.00. How correct was this reasoning is demonstrated by the growth in membership that began at that time, soaring from 25 members to the present number.

As Hazen Converse enthusiastically concludes, "I will go on record saying that there is not another club in the whole world that gives so much for so little as this one does."

OKMULGEE ON ITS OWN—Okmulgee (Okla.) CC where Charley Worley is pro, had a chance to buy its property consisting of 160 acres, a 9-hole course and a 2-story native stone clubhouse. The price was \$20,000. The club passed the hat asking for \$100 donations from members and got



Okmulgee CC Clubhouse

231 to toss in. Now the club's going to add 9 holes, build a swimming pool and install tennis courts. Okmulgee's population is about 19,000. Keen and extensive golf interest there is typical of interest throughout the state where a golf boom last year far surpassed previous records. Oklahoma hopes to develop a new crop of kid stars to take the spotlight away from its neighbor, Texas, which long has been the top state for development of golf talent.