

Industrial Golf Destined to Grow Gigantic

By JOHN BUDD

En-Joie Golf Club, Endicott, N.Y.

The mid-twenties saw golf tagged as the "rich man's game." Average workers in America generally considered this fine sport out of their reach.

Gradually there came into American golf—between the private and public courses—the industrial golf course. These layouts started slowly and still are far short of needed number.

However there are some outstanding industrial programs operating in golf today and giving promise of what looms ahead. Some of the outstanding ones are: Firestone Rubber Co. at Akron, O., Sylvania Electric Co. at Salem, Mass., Union Bag & Paper Co. at Savannah, Ga., United Shoe Machinery at Beverly, Mass., The DuPont course in Delaware, Plymouth Country club at Plymouth, N. C., General Electric Co., Schenectady, N.Y., Hershey Chocolate Corp. at Hershey, Penna., I.B.M. Country club at Endicott, N.Y. and the course I serve, En-Joie Golf club, owned and operated by Endicott Johnson Corp. at Endicott, N.Y. There are many others and more on the planning boards.

Players who are fortunate enough to enjoy these golf programs find good golf near to their work. The cost is very low; the courses are beautifully maintained and a golf promotional program is recruiting more players each season.

Big and medium-sized corporations are recognizing that money expended in this type of recreation program is good business. The workers are better satisfied, enjoy better health and are happy because of leisure time well spent.

The cost of industrial golf programs is a regular and legitimate business expense and this factor is favorable to more development in the near future. The same amount of money spent in other recreations and aimed at satisfying workers cannot hope to compete with a sound golf program in good-will gained for the community, the employees and the employer. As industrial employees develop their golfing skill they are quick to realize the advantages of having a course available near their homes. They soon appreciate that they are enjoying in industrial golf what

they would have to pay a stiff price for as private club members. This realization makes a deep impression as the program unfolds and golf promotion takes a real hold on the mass of workers.

Golf to Please Workers

Satisfied workers in these days of labor strife and constant bickering certainly is the hopeful aim of all business and industrial firms. They are groping for some means to better labor relations. Golf gives part of the answer in most localities.

When the average industrial employee can be converted to golf near his home and provided with good greens and fairways to play on he will think more than once before he walks out on strike for some minor reason. He and his family will be happy and satisfied because leisure time is better used in wholesome recreation. The overall labor picture at that spot will be made mutually satisfactory.

Family Enjoys Industrial Club

The family angle is important in the picture. Most industrial golf programs are an integral part of a broader recreational program. This allows children and wives to enjoy not only golf but other outdoor recreations, swimming pools, supervised playgrounds and many other features that build up the desire in that family to STAY PUT. Is this good business, to keep this family group better satisfied with conditions where they will live their life and raise their children on the American standard?

Hershey has its zoo and a full program of play activities. This jewel of a town is the mecca of people, young and old from all over its immediate area. There is activity for all.

Here at Endicott-Johnson we have well supervised playgrounds, "name" bands for dances with a total ticket cost of \$1.50, while the average good band can be danced to for 50 cents.

Our Summer holiday programs draw people by the thousands and the children look months ahead for them. On Sundays the people of our Valley gather for band concerts in En-Joie Park. Merry-go-rounds, swimming pools, softball and base-

ball, a big bowling program, now sparked by announcement of 24 alleys for exclusive use of the E.J. Athletic Assn. Our golf is part of a well rounded program.

Club is Community Center

I.B.M. Country club has 27 activities in its program. Most of the sports and recreations are centered around the country club. The day nursery school, swimming pool and playground make the program appealing to the whole family.

Can you see how hard it would be for a worker to leave his spot at these industrial recreation centers and take his loving family into an area where such wonderful things would be missing? What would his family say? Good business? You guess.

Business leaders will surely realize the possibilities of this type of program. Many think the cost is too great; many just don't understand golf. But, there is a selling job to be done, and when it is completed, industrial golf will be en route to that future it richly merits.

Types and cost of industrial golf clubs stretch all the way from the Attapulgus Clay Co., Attapulgus, Ga., and its small but cozy golf course and country club nestled in South Georgia's tall pines and costing a scant amount of money to the big, well-rounded programs at Hershey, IBM and General Electric, where the costs run into hundreds of thousands.

By using company labor and local talent the Attapulgus outfit and its 40 members completed a real nice nine holes, with sand greens and a comfortable clubhouse with a lake adjacent. They have fun at this place I know, because I once taught there and am glad to number these fine people among my friends.

Firestone Rubber Co. in Akron brings big name golfers there to open their golf leagues each season. More and more players are using their facilities each year.

At Hershey, Pa., workers can enjoy two 18-hole layouts and two 9-hole courses. Even the junior and lady players are accommodated on the short Junior Club course. Their program is a model of what can be done. Hershey employees can enjoy their golf for nominal cost and within a scant few minutes of their jobs. What a blessing this is to the tired worker on a summer afternoon.

Golf After Work

At our own En-Joie Course in Endicott, the workers, and local enthusiasts as well, can enjoy one of the finest conditioned golf courses in the country. Eighteen holes of golf laid out along the valley of the beautiful Susquehanna River over rolling ter-

rain give E. J. workers their round of golf for 25 cents or for an annual fee of \$15. Most workers can reach the course in 15 to 20 minutes. Since the factories close at 4 P.M. and some workers are off earlier, they have daily opportunities for 18 holes of golf.

George F. Johnson, originator of Industrial Democracy for Endicott-Johnson workers, had the dream of the En-Joie course. He wanted a course that was not too hard, not expensive, and one that would give the most opportunity to play golf. The course has flourished from the start and now plays 40,000 rounds each season. It is becoming increasingly evident that more facilities will have to be provided soon.

En-Joie is unique because it allows players other than E. J. workers to enjoy their golf on its course. Workers get first priority, then other players are accommodated to the extent possible.

At nearby I.B.M. Country club, where Eddie Kuhn is professional, the club caters only to I.B.M. employees who get their golf over a beautiful rolling layout of 27 holes for 35 cents per day. At I.B.M. they have been very successful with League play and will broaden this program during the 1947 season.

Industrial Golf's Pro Prospects

What does industrial golf offer the professional? The golf professional will work hard, but get a fair break all the way because he is working for a business concern that will probably have the same top management for many years to come. If the professional does a decent job he will not risk being dropped summarily late in some golf season because some member with nothing to recommend him beyond a great desire for power has been placed in a position of command in some private club set-up.

Security in the job is one of the first considerations of the pro considering the industrial golf position. Next, and very important, is the salary angle. The professional is recognized by business as a highly skilled professional man and is accorded that rank in business dealings.

It will not be necessary to undergo the humiliation of seeing your small salary cut to nothing while a dishwasher or bus boy is raised to an all-time high in pay. Your worth will be evaluated in a businesslike manner and maybe the figure they offer will startle you, after the usual salary wrangling connected with the average private club of today.

Your work will be about the same; maybe more teaching than you can handle. You

will have plenty of golf classes and if you are smart, will give all the two minute tips you can to those who play over the course. This in the long haul will make your value skyrocket and will not hurt you when merchandise is to be bought.

There are several means of setting up the industrial golf contract for the professional. Many jobs pay a good salary and give all concessions. Others, like I.B.M. Country club, pay the professional a good salary, but have all concessions. The professional staff gives all lessons without charge. The golf shop at I.B.M. also gives employees a 20% discount on all merchandise.

Union Bag & Paper Co. in Savannah, Ga. has always been noted for the good salary paid and the liberal contract between pro and company.

Tom Mahan, at United Shoe Machinery, Beverly, Mass., has enjoyed a fine professional contract for years and rates as one of the keenest pros in industrial golf today.

Under many of these industrial set-ups the professional enjoys retirement benefits, insurance coverage and other features that rarely are available to our profession. The I.B.M. professional staff enjoys insurance and a retirement plan, while at Endicott-Johnson I am eligible for complete medical, dental, and hospital services for my family and myself in line with the E. J. medical program that gives these benefits to all workers.

Young professionals who really have promotional ability and stable working habits would do well to consider the future offered by the ever expanding industrial golf program. Maybe an individual will have to fit himself for the job ahead, but it is a sound plan and one that merits attention and good preparation. It is no place for the loafer or the poorly prepared professional who cannot organize and run a smart golf program and keep stride with the development of the industrial organization operating the course.

Industrial Programs Expanding

The time is not far distant when most industries will have a sound golf program. There will be the easy 9 holes for the beginners, youngsters and ladies. This type of simple layout will promote new players. This will be the sandlot of golf.

Next up the ladder will be tougher nines that will develop better golf technique, lower scoring and more urge to go higher in the game.

Average 18-hole courses will be provided for the great mass of average players and then there will be the championship test, like Hershey's famous country club course, scene of many heated title battles.

One thing is evident; industrial golfers, allowed the chance to play and practice often near their homes and at nominal cost, can play more golf than any other class of young to middle age Americans. They develop fast, having more than average knack with hands, and keen muscular co-ordination as well. At En-Joie we have 62 players who can break 80 more than twice in a season. We have an additional 119 who can shoot steady in the 80 to 90 bracket. This high type of golf has developed in less than 20 years. We have 13 who broke 70 during the 1946 season. This play on a really stout 18 of 6300 yards.

What an opportunity for the professional who really has the coaching personality in golf! He can find real talent, develop it and know that his pupils will have ample chance to practice it and accomplish the best that is in them.

Golf manufacturers will be quick to see the fertile field for golf in industry. Their business is closely linked with this development. You see these players at industrial courses playing with the finest equipment and top grade golf balls. These fellows have a certain amount of extra cash to spend on their chosen pastime and they channel that amount into their golf each week of the season.

Industrial golf is the growing giant of the game because it can tap uncounted millions of Americans who are hungry for outdoor recreation.

Golf will fit easily into the program of many business firms and the needed budget is available. These courses as they develop will give more good jobs to more competent golf professionals. Better players will be developed because here is a field of individuals who lend themselves naturally to the game and have ability to be great players.

So watch the industrial golf picture widen in the coming years. Watch as it counts its golf converts in millions, not in thousands.

When that development has been realized golf in our country will take its place where it should, at the head of the recreational parade.

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