

Architect's drawing which incorporates the modern ideas of a successful and progressive golf range operator for the clubhouse of a contemplated golf range project. Plans provide space for 24 automatic tee units located on a sheltered porch facing the fairway. Important feature of the building is single entrance through which all traffic must pass to reach the practice range.

What Is the Future of Golf Driving Range Operation?

By JOE MOZEL

Editor's Note: — By most people in the business, Joe Mozel is looked upon as a dean of golf range planners and operators. Starting as an assistant caddy (he was too little to tote a full bag), Joe has gone the route from full-fledged caddy to professional to operator of golf courses and ranges. Since 1936 Joe has operated the Lloyd Golf Course and Sheltered Range in Portland, Oregon, one of the most successful ventures of its kind in the nation. He is also inventor, manufacturer and marketer of an electric tee and other golf devices.

It would take a contortionist to keep his ear to the ground, his eye on the future, and his finger on the public pulse all at the same time. Nevertheless, any pro who is operating an old-fashioned "stop and sock" type of driving range had better practice up on all those wise habits and buy a first class crystal ball because the chances are he'll find his driving range days definitely numbered.

Even an old second hand, cut, cloudy,

out-of-round crystal ball will tell the most casual observer that there's gold in golf balls but it'll take first class equipment and management to get it. Pick and shovel prospectors had better save their time.

Just look around. Where are those dozens of shacks on the edges of overgrown vacant lots with their once-bright "driving range" signs? A lot of them have gone already and a lot more are doomed to follow if they don't spruce up a bit and learn that golf is big business and deserves a big business approach.

Smart operators don't even call them "driving ranges" any more. The few pioneers in golf's "new look" correctly call their establishments "golf ranges" and they mean every word of it. Take our operation in Portland, for instance. At the Lloyd Golf Course and Sheltered Range a golfer may drive golf balls, to be sure. But that's not all. He may drive them in all kinds of weather, winter or summer, day or night and enjoy every single drive from one of our 14 automatic tees that serve up a golf ball every 4½ seconds.

And mere driving isn't by any means the whole story. Our golfers may practice fairway iron and wood shots, from grass-green Tampico fiber "brushes" that have the look and feel of fine turf and take a lot of punishment without a whimper. In fair weather, day or night, our customers enjoy a complete outdoor putting green that's brilliantly lighted after sundown. When the weather's wet (and that's pretty frequently in Oregon) we invite them inside to use a carpeted 5-hole putting green that features our automatic tee unit at green level.

Before, during or after their practice sessions at Lloyd's our customers may eat and drink in attractive surroundings, take a shower, change clothes and select fine golf equipment from our large stock. We feature complete courses of golf instruction and our teaching professionals seldom have any vacancies in their day-and-night teaching schedules during the season. In winter, too, they carry substantial teaching schedules.

Immediately adjoining our clubhouse (a \$100,000 investment nearly 20 years ago) is a sporty nine hole golf course that's rated high among those of its size in the nation. Except in midwinter, the course is nearly always filled with players and even during the winter months golfers brave Oregon's famed mists in surprising numbers.

All this doesn't sound much like the "stop and swat" driving ranges, does it? It isn't. Here, capital, advanced equipment and efficient operation have combined to make Lloyd's one of the showplaces of the community, and a highly profitable one, at that. Consistently, this famous golf recreation center has shown a profit, even when its million dollar total value is taken into consideration.

All this seems to me to be the answer to the question, "What is the future of driving range operation?" The answer is simply that "stop and sock" ranges are on their way out and in their places will come well engineered recreation centers for the whole family built around that most

promising of all sports, golf. An estimated four million men, women and children play the game today. Ten times that number are prospects for golf tomorrow if only proper facilities are provided and enterprising capital and sound management team up on the project.

Bucket of Fun

Look at it this way. Every golfer wants to lower his score. Instruction and practice will lower his score. Instruction and practice can be (and too frequently are) hard work. They don't have to be; they can be fun when they're carried on conveniently and in pleasant surroundings.

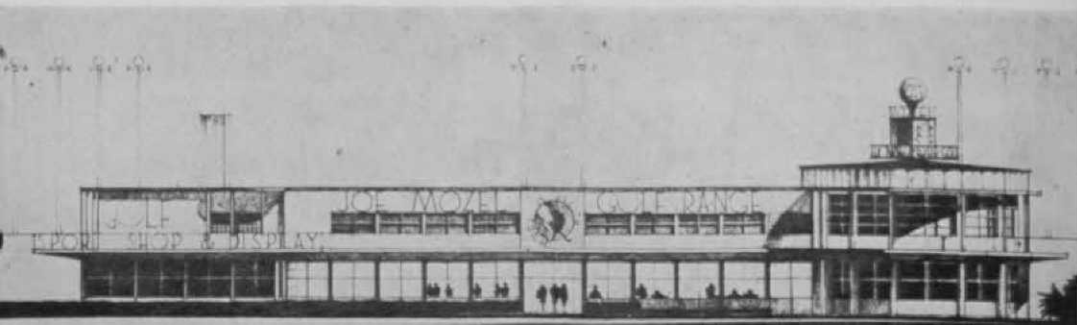
Just the other day, for instance, a golfing customer of mine came into the pro shop. He wanted a bucket of balls to practice shots that had been giving him trouble. Did he just order a bucket of balls? Not on your life! That fellow laid his dough on the line and said, "Joe, give me a bucket of fun!" That's what golf range operation can be: "A bucket of fun!"

People like to have fun and they're willing to pay for fun. But they like to eat, drink and relax while they're having fun. They like to be pampered. They like the economy and convenience of public facilities like ours but they also like the "clubhouse feel" we give them from the time they drive into our private, paved parking lot until they leave several hours later refreshed, relaxed and well fed.

Automatic Tee Key to Future

Out here in Portland they call the combination I've outlined the "Mozel System." There's no secret about it. It is based on professional technique with the personal touch. We simply give our customers the best of everything from food and drink to putting greens and automatic tees. It's the Mozel automatic electric tee that sets the "tone" of the whole operation. I'm mighty proud of the tee, of course. I make a profit out of manufacturing and selling it and get a big kick out of seeing it installed and doing a job. But it's not just selfish interest that makes me say that the automatic

Front elevation of proposed clubhouse shows floor space for the following: (First floor) lounge, coffee shop, dining room, kitchen, golf office (including golf merchandise display room), and women's rest rooms; (Second floor) Banquet rooms overlooking range, with buffet kitchen; (Full basement) men's dressing rooms, tiled showers, individual lockers, club room, employees' rest rooms and storage space.



tee is the heart of golf ranges of the future. I've proven it on the world's finest golf proving ground coupled with 28 years in the golf business. People like to practice from an automatic tee. Instead of a bucket of balls being a bucket of work it's now a bucket of fun, as the fellow said.

Yes, the combination of attractive surroundings, automatic tees, fairway practice and putting facilities, good food and drink make me certain that there's a big future in golf ranges. It's the kind of future that takes capital and sound management combined. I know; I've seen it happen and I'm staking my whole future on the belief that it will happen over and over again from one end of America to the other.

It won't happen without work and capital and it certainly won't happen without cooperation. The editors of *Golfdom* have suggested a sensible means of cooperation and I'm all for it. Let's organize the American Association of Golf Range Operators to exchange ideas on golf range operation. We all have ideas on what will make golf ranges better. Let's get together and perhaps we can help bring golf into the heritage it so richly deserves.

GOLF EVENTS, New Booklet For Tournament Chairmen



Cover photo of new booklet of popular golf events for tournament chairmen.

Every tournament chairman will want a copy of *GOLF EVENTS*, a new publication issued by the National Golf Founda-

tion to assist in planning a club calendar of daily, weekly, monthly and season-long competitions which will increase attendance and build course patronage.

GOLF EVENTS lists 67 of the most popular club events in groupings according to play for individuals, twosomes, threesomes, foursomes, larger groups and novelty events and tells how to conduct each of them. Designed to satisfy the competitive urge of every golfer and avoid the monotony in the club golfing calendar, the booklet will help create a schedule of contests with plenty of sales appeal, novelty and sporting challenge to give members a different form of competition for every weekend.

In addition to the check-list of events the booklet tells How to Handicap; How to Allocate Handicap Strokes; How to Set Up Match Play Scoresheet; How to Make Pairings; How to Distribute Byes; How to Seed; Where to Locate Seeded Entries; Setting Deadlines for Play; Length of Matches and Duration of Tournaments.

GOLF EVENTS is a handbook every golf club and tournament chairman needs. Individual copies are twenty cents postpaid. You can get your copy by writing the National Golf Foundation, 407 South Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill.

1949 PGA Tourney to Richmond, Va.

The PGA has awarded its 1949 championship to the Hermitage CC, Richmond, Va. The tournament will be a \$30,000 event sponsored jointly by the Hermitage CC and the Sportsmen's Club and will be played May 25-31.

Award of the PGA championship to the Richmond club is the culmination of two years work on the part of Tom C. Utterbach, Hermitage Tournament Committee Chmn. and member of the PGA Advisory Committee. Charles E. "Chick" Wilkinson, Jr. is General Chmn. for the tournament.

USGA PLACES 1950 CHAMPIONSHIPS

USGA has awarded 1950 National Open to Merion Cricket club, Ardmore (Philadelphia dist.) Pa., and 1950 National Amateur to Minneapolis Golf club, St. Louis Park, Minn. Dates are to be announced later.

Merion was host to the 1934 National Open; 1916, 1924 and 1930 National Amateur; 1904, 1909 and 1926 Women's National; and 1919 and 1926 National Intercollegiate.

Minneapolis Golf club makes its debut in 1950 as a national championship club.