

Playground Golf Added to D. C. Recreation Program

By MILO F. CHRISTIANSEN

“BOGEY,” “divot,” “duffer,” “stymie?” Yes, the children of Washington, D. C., know what these golf terms mean, and what's more they're learning to play golf!

Last summer the D. C. Recreation Department inaugurated an intensive campaign encouraging the children on their playgrounds to learn golf. And learn they did! Thousands of children on 131 playgrounds learned stance, grip, and swing and finished the summer by competing in a real tournament.

It all started in September 1951 when Mr. Harry Wender, Chairman of the Recreation Board, invited the pros and leading amateur golfers of Washington to plan a program of Playground Golf for the boys and girls of the city. More than forty representatives of golfing interests from public and private clubs, civic organizations, sporting goods stores, and the Professional Golf Association met with members of the Recreation Department staff to consider the plan. The program was not designed to interfere with existing programs at the various clubs, public links, or driving ranges but it was pointed out that in time it would increase participation at these locations by developing more interest in golf at a younger age level. Full support to the program was pledged by all with many pros and amateurs volunteering their time for instruction and promotion.

Poster Contest

In the spring a poster contest was launched with a twofold purpose; to create interest, and to secure donations of clubs, bags, and balls. Prizes were awarded for the winning posters and all were placed in store windows and on playgrounds. The equipment received, though not in the best condition, was patched up and distributed to the various playgrounds.

Clinics at Playgrounds

Golf clinics were held on the playgrounds during March with pros and amateurs there to talk golf, show movies, and teach. Driving nets, plastic balls, and driving machines were available on the playgrounds for practice and instruction. By the end

of August there were enough boys and girls with sufficient knowledge of the rules and a fair amount of skill to compete in a tournament. The operator of the public links set aside two of his courses for a day and juniors and seniors played as guests of the management. The tournament was divided according to age and sex with juniors 14 and under and seniors 17 and under. Each region of the city selected its best players and prizes were awarded the winners.

The purpose of the golf program was to stimulate interest by providing experiences and opportunities in a real golfing situation, not by creating miniature courses or playing tin can or clock golf. Playground directors used their ingenuity in creating a variety of experiences which approximated an actual golf situation. Some playgrounds were near enough to a public course so that the boys and girls could actually play on a real fairway and green. Others set up putting greens and sometimes there was room for approach shots. These situations were supplemented with driving nets and the Folda-Fairway Home Golf Course. This machine consists of a ball fastened to a line which winds around a drum when the ball is hit. The position it takes on the drum indicates whether the ball would have gone straight down the fairway, slightly to the right or left, or would have sliced or hooked. The machine is also calibrated to show the length of the drive. These machines are light in weight and could be carried from one playground to another, thus increasing their use. It is planned to buy a number of additional machines and extend their use next spring and summer.

Some playgrounds used the Folda-Fairway and created a synthetic golfing situation by setting up distances and pars for an imaginary course. The player would determine the length of his drive and take his second shot on the machine using the club he thought would be necessary to get the green. Once on the green he would measure off the distance of his putt on a

putting green; use a tin can for the cup, and finish the hole. In this manner there could be real competition among players. Many adults found enjoyment in playing "lazy man's golf" in this way and would ask to have the machine reserved for them after dinner.

Testing for Achievement

To provide the children with some measure of their ability an achievement program was inaugurated. Four tests were prepared which would cover background, terminology, and skills. The purpose of the tests was to encourage more participation in the Playground Golf program, acquaint the children with fundamental and basic skills, and give them a playing knowledge of the game. The tests are designed so that the first three can be passed on the playground, only the fourth needing an actual course situation. Sleeve patches were awarded upon the completion of each test and indicated whether the child was a "Turfmite," "Duffer," "Divoteer," or "Junior Master." (See illustrations.)

THE TESTS

These tests are to be given all boys and girls on our units who wish to participate in the Playground Golf Program and when they have successfully passed them they will become members of the unit golf club.

The purpose of these tests is to:

1. Create, stimulate, and encourage more participation in the game of golf among the playground boys and girls.
2. Acquaint the boys and girls with the fundamental and basic skills of the game.
3. Awaken in the boys and girls a playing knowledge of the game.

After satisfactory completion of each test, designated patches will be presented to each candidate.

Turfmites (Beginners' Test) — Test No. 1

1. A brief knowledge of the "History of Golf."
2. Golf courtesies.
3. Definition of the following basic golf terms:

(a) course	(j) flagstick
(b) teeing	(k) ball-washer
(c) green	(l) rack
(d) hole	(m) tee-marker
(e) stroke	(n) starter
(f) fairway	(o) golf-attendant
(g) rough	(p) complete golf equipment
(h) tee	
(i) sand-trap	



Colorful sleeve patch awarded to youngsters passing final golf test.

Duffers — Test No. 2

1. Identify golf clubs and know their uses.
2. Proper grip and stance.
3. Ability to use correctly the following clubs:

(a) driver	(b) putter
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4. Definition of the following golf terms:

(a) side	(e) par
(b) through the green	(f) honour
(c) hazards	(g) bogey
(d) out of bounds	(h) caddie
	(i) fore

Divoteers — Test No. 3

1. Completed swing of all clubs.
2. Judging distances for correct usage of clubs.
3. How to check wind direction and contour of the hole for play advantages.
4. Definition of the following golf terms:

(a) penalty stroke	(i) mixed fore-some
(b) addressing the ball	(j) scotch fore-some
(c) loose impediments	(k) best ball
(d) stance	(l) eagle
(e) match play	(m) ace
(f) medal play	(n) birdie
(g) handicap	(o) blind bogey tournament
(h) lost ball	

Junior Masters — Test No. 4

1. Ability to use all clubs in a game situation.
2. Ability to score a game.
3. Demonstrate proper golf etiquette.

Although the achievement and award programs were late in starting, much interest was shown and it is planned to continue through the winter with an award night in the spring when all youngsters will receive patches for the tests they passed during the winter. An interesting program with movies, demonstrations, and a "name" golfer to make the awards should be a grand "tee-off" for the spring and summer program.

Naturally some flaws in programming and promotion were discovered, but by and large the results were more than satisfactory. Golf is now accepted as an integral part of the D. C. Recreation program and just as important as any other sport conducted by the department.

Playground Golf as promoted by the D. C. department is new to the public recreation movement. Washington is believed to be among the first if not THE first city to add golf to its recreation program on a par with other sports. It is hoped that other cities will follow their lead and bring golf within the reach of the children of America. The youngsters of today will be the golfers of tomorrow. Who knows? One of the boys who took his first swing last summer may win the National Amateur in 1962!

Caddies "Celebrities" Show Big Hit at Columbus, O.

CELEBRITIES" tournament held at Scioto CC, Columbus, O., as curtain-raiser of the National Caddie Assn. tournament drew about 7500, mostly teen-agers ecstatic at seeing Eddie Fisher, Perry Como, Fred Waring, Martin and Lewis and Miss Photoflash of 1953 in the meat.

Miraculously 9 holes were played at Scioto without any of the crowding, clamoring kids getting hit. Pro talent included Burkemo, Burke, Jr., Worsham, Demaret, Toski, Douglas, Penna, Middlecoff, Oliver, Shute, the Bauer sisters, Heggie, Nichols, and Harry Obitz and his "golf ballet" team of Jack Ryan, Steve Dudas, Al Nelson and Dick Farley.

Especially interesting was the kids' enthusiastic reaction to the exhibition of shot-making in the "ballet" act Obitz and his staff worked out at Waring's Shawnee CC. That and Jimmy Nichols' one-armed performance apparently got many of the kids wanting to make shots themselves.

Dizzy Dean and Eddie Arcaro were among celebrities playing.

Newspaper publicity on the tournament and the premier of "The Caddy," new Martin and Lewis picture, was greater and livelier than any other tournament coverage we've ever seen. State Auditor James A. Rhodes, founder of the National Caddie Assn., and Bob Husted, Jr., Rhodes' representative in charge of the affair, did a great job. Cooperation of Charles Vittitoe, PGA Caddie chmn., and Tom Crane, PGA executive sec., Paramount Pictures publicity staff, and Columbus officials, headed by Mayor Oestreicher, was energetic and complete.

Martin and Lewis, on behalf of Paramount, presented Rhodes with an \$8000 check at premier, representing proceeds of the opening night. Next year Paramount plans to have world premier of a Hope and Crosby picture as a Caddie tournament feature at Columbus, with Bing Crosby and Bob Hope playing in the curtain-raising tournament.

Harry Wismer was ringmaster of the tournament and the premier, in his characteristically highly competent manner.

May Signs Worsham to \$35,000 Exhibition Deal

Lew Worsham, whose spectacular sinking of an approach shot for an eagle two won him the \$25,000 first prize in the 1953 World Championship at Tam O' Shanter CC, has been signed to a contract to play exhibitions under the sponsorship of the George S. May Co. The contract runs for one year and guarantees Worsham 35 exhibitions at \$1,000 plus expenses for each appearance.

Providing for a possible 50 exhibitions per year at the same fee, May indicates that a similar contract is to be offered each year's World Championship winner. With top money for the coming year already raised to \$50,000, this places a total potential value of \$100,000 on winning of the tournament.

The schedule of exhibitions, which will cover the United States and Canada, will be announced as cities and dates are selected. Executives of the George S. May Co. field staff will cooperate in planning the schedule and setting up local arrangements. "This means that many local communities which would never have the opportunity of seeing an outstanding golf player will now be able to see a top professional each year," says May.