

More Exciting than the Oil Boom

## Smart Promotions Make Golf Big Business in Small New Mexico Town

By ART GATTS

THE busiest nine-hole private golf club in the country calls for superlative efficiency and savvy in the pro department to keep operations merry and serene.

And the Hobbs (N.M.) CC has got that competent and calm management under pro Dode Forrester. There's no doubt about that. There's not reason either for doubting the Hobbs club's distinction as the liveliest of all nine-hole private clubs. It's got the largest tournament in the southwest as an annual fixture, several other big annual events, a steady program of golf members' competition and social activity and, in general, reflects the vigorous spirit of an oil-rich town of 28,000 where golf is played the year around.

The Hobbs CC is the scene of the Petroleum Institute's annual blind bogey scholarship trophy, an event that has a field of more than 600.

Last year 625 players entered the tournament and by the time they had fired their nine holes of golf, the HCC greens looked like they had been bombarded. But they all played, and winners — everyone wins something — collected \$5,000 in merchandise prizes. This year 804 golfers shared an even larger list of prizes.

Dode starts teeing off the foursomes at 5:14 a. m. on Friday and Saturday. Sometimes the last group needs a flashlight to line-up the final putt but everyone has a big time doing it.

Southeastern New Mexico's API chapter sponsors the tourney and the profits are used to provide four college scholarships to students majoring in an oil-industry course.

Every sixth player wins a major prize (golf bag, dozen balls, golf shoes, etc.) This year 68 dozen golf balls were donated by the Milwhite Mud Co. of Hobbs. Everyone teeing off got one Titleist ball. Not bad for the pro shop.

A month before the tourney starts, prizes start coming in. Pledged early for this year's tournament were 25 pairs of golf shoes, 17 golf bags, 20 dozen golf balls, four sets of irons, six sets of woods, five putters, golf cart seats, a dozen steaks (to be flown from Fort Worth), a cart and bag, two carts, two dozen sports shirts and golf slacks, gift certificates for \$25 and \$15 and \$80 worth of luggage.

### Club 20 Years Old

Hobbs Country Club was organized in 1936 and grass greens were installed in 1938. Dode has been pro at Hobbs since



A few of the more than 800 golfers who took part in the American Petroleum Institute's 1956 blind bogey tournament at Hobbs CC get ready to scramble for a warehouse full of prizes. Everyone entering the tournament came away with some item from the \$5,000 plus collection of merchandise. Play started at 5 a.m. on Friday and continued through nightfall of the following day.

1948. His brother, Al, is professional of the new Hobbs Municipal course, finished last summer and already bustling with activity.

And to keep it in the family, the Forresters have another brother, Doyle, who is Dode's assistant!

The country club is planning to build another nine holes because the present nine — evenly divided among par 5, par 4 and par 3 holes — is a bit crowded most of the time. The club has a closed membership now — 325 persons — and future applications for memberships go on the waiting list.

**(Editor's Note: Hobbs CC officials just recently announced that Warren Cantrell, Lubbock, Tex., golf architect, has been hired to design an additional nine holes.)**

Besides the API, the club sponsors an Invitation in June, ladies and men's club championships, a junior invitation, a spring men's tournament and hosts a West Texas-New Mexico sectional pro-am.

The Invitation is something else Hobbs is proud of. It annually attracts almost 200 entries — another rush on a nine-hole course — from some three states. The hospitality is famous. Such players as Billy Maxwell, Joe Conrad, Don Cherry and Rex Baxter Jr. have played in the tournaments.

In 1953, a \$3,500 Hobbs Open was won by Dutch Harrison, who set the present course record of 61 in the first round. Fred Hawkins, Dick Metz, Tommy Bolt, Jackson Bradley, Chuck Klein and Ray Gafford were among those entered. Conrad was low amateur.

The national junior sectional qualifying has also been held there the past few years. Junior golf is a big item in Forrester

and club plans. Hobbs has sent players to the national junior and national Jaycee tournaments the last two years and the Hobbs High golf team uses the club as its home base.

#### **Honesty Has Its Reward**

Trophies are given for the low individual score and to the most honest golfers — last year's winner scored 73 strokes. One man won a set of irons last year and said: "What am I going to do with them? This is the only time I ever play golf." Remarks such as this are heard all around.

There are 10 separate blind bogie prizes — closest to the pin on a certain hole, closest to a flag in a fairway of another, long drive, putting, players coming the greatest distance, player guessing the number of balls going into the lake on one hole (124 last year).

In eight years, only one hole-in-one has been made in the API tourney, but one day two holes-in-one were made on the same hole within 20 minutes of each other at Hobbs CC.

Dode provides a temporary practice putting green during the tournament — 600 golfers would ruin the permanent, regular green. It was left open once and had to be closed for three months to allow recovery.

Yep, Hobbs is a growing, bustling town and golf grows with it. The census in 1930 for instance was 598, in 1940 it was 10,619. That had jumped to 13,875 in 1950 and Chamber of Commerce officials estimate 28,000 now.

The first oil well in the Hobbs pool

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Manufacturer of finest quality caps for Golf and Sports has some territories open in Central, Eastern and Southern States. No other cap line compares with it for styles and values. IMPERIAL CAP WORKS, INC., 1337 Lawrence Street, Denver, Colorado

Wanted — Pro-Manager for a nine hole private course in South. 150 member families. Must be a competent course, pool and house manager as well as pro. Residence, utilities, salary, plus proceeds from pro shop. Address Ad 808 c/o Golfdom

#### MISCELLANEOUS

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For Sale — Indoor golf practice range and golf school, 7 automatic tees. In downtown San Francisco. Grosses \$35,000.00. Long low cost lease. Price \$25,000.00. Address Ad 806 c/o Golfdom

Wanted — Driving range or acting interest, in southwestern or western state. Address Ad 807 c/o Golfdom

Driving Range on U. S. 31, 3 1/2 miles north of South Haven, 16 Tees, ball picker, Worthington 3 section lawn mower and all essential golf equipment. Write to: Joseph Martan, Route 2, South Haven, Mich.

FOR SALE — E-Z GO ELECTRIC GOLF CARS (USED). LESS THAN 1 YEAR OLD. \$500.00 EACH. ADDRESS AD 818 c/o GOLFDOM

Wanted — to buy or long term lease, 18 hole golf course preferably with D3 or private club liquor permit, in a radius of 30 miles from Cleveland proper. Address Ad 819 c/o Golfdom

#### WANTED FOR CASH

Old Golf Balls retrieved from ponds, or out of bounds, on or around Golf Courses.  
 Cuts and bumped ..... 36 per doz.  
 Off brands & synthetic, or slightly nicked 1.56 per doz.  
 Round & Perfect \$1.25 brands for  
 refinishing ..... 2.40 per doz.  
 Like new top grade for rewashing ..... 3.60 per doz.  
 NOTE:—Golf range cuts, picked over lots, and cut deep into the rubber types wanted, but not acceptable at above figures.

#### Send for shipping tags and Instructions DRIVING RANGE MEN—REBUILDING

Your old cores recovered with the new type paintless cover. Tested and proven to be the best process in rebuilding for range or miniature course use. Guaranteed 100% against seam splitting.

— Price per doz., on exchange \$2.60.

#### — Golf Balls for Retail Sales Only —

Same deal as above, but recovered with regulation brand new ballata cover, named, and two coats of durable enamel. We accept your mixed compression cores and return only high compression (no shrinkage) at no extra charge. A fast seller @ 50c to 65c each. Also nation-wide distributors of the best in golf range & miniature course equipment—Balls, clubs, mats, and etc. Catalog on request.

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#### WE NEED USED GOLF BALLS

Cash paid for balls retrieved from ponds, and found on Golf Courses.

Cuts and out of round ..... 36c per dozen  
 Balls round and not cut ..... \$1.50 per dozen  
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 Golf Range cuts and sorted cuts—including balls deeply cut not accepted at above prices.

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P.O. box 366, WEST CHICAGO, ILL.  
 PHONE: West Chicago 50

## Golf Boom in Hobbs

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was drilled in April, 1927, and is still producing. A monument has been erected and dedicated to that well. Now there are 6,000 producing wells in Lea County, which furnishes 90 per cent of the state's production. New Mexico ranks seventh in the nation among oil states.

There are only a half dozen days a year — during a dust storm or a snow storm — when you can't play golf in Hobbs. There's a "Teeoff at 12:30 Club" that meets six days a week for "business" sessions. The dozen members skipped meetings about eight times last year.

They were back in no time, though.

## Maleic Hydrazide

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I is a close-up taken Nov. 17, right after the second mowing; the pencil is on the line dividing treated and untreated areas of the green.

Temperatures of 100 and higher during the month of June, 1956, favorable to the growth of Bermuda, brought a gradual transition from bent to Bermuda. When observed June 21, the greens were approximately 75 per cent Bermuda and 25 per cent bent. On the check green the sprayed and unsprayed areas were alike in appearance.

It should be pointed out that the above work applies only to common Bermuda grass. Before large scale applications are made on the numerous fine leaved strains of Bermuda or on other warm season grasses, test plots should be established. Too, it should be emphasized that the above results were obtained under Arizona conditions and that climatic conditions in other areas where common Bermuda is grown may be sufficiently different to produce variable results. Nevertheless, Maleic Hydrazide may prove a valuable tool in transition from warm to cool season grasses on courses throughout the Bermuda grass area.

## Park Executives Meet

The 58th conference of the American Institute of Park Executives will be held Sept. 9-14 in the Olympic Hotel, Seattle, Wash. One of the highlights of the conference will be the golf course planning clinic scheduled for the 12th.