

Big Dreams, Small Capital Bring Course to Barboursville

By DON HATFIELD

How do you go about building and financing a course, the realization of a lifelong dream, when you haven't any money?

John (Patsy) Jefferson of Barboursville, W. Va., simply sold a few friends and a bank on the idea and proceeded with construction.

Today, Jefferson owns one of the finest, 9-hole courses in the West Virginia-Kentucky-Ohio area. Last May he and a few friends completed a beautiful 3,067-yard course, complete with lake, locker rooms and snack bar.

In building the course, which is open to the public, Jefferson not only pleased all the would-be golfers in the tri-state area but gave the Huntington Chamber of Commerce something its recreational committee had sought for five years.

A course was all Patsy ever really wanted. But that appeared pretty hopeless since you just don't go out and build such things on the salary of a junior high school football and basketball coach.

Patsy's First Venture

In 1950 he signed as pro and one-quarter-owner (after borrowing some money from his dubious father) at a small, 9-hole layout near Barboursville, known as Knob Hill. Here he learned a great deal about turf and greens.

Not much more than a year later, the recreation committee of the Chamber of Commerce took up the problem of building a public course near Huntington. A public course would be another industry lure. However, the Chamber could not set aside much money for such a cause.

Meanwhile, Knob Hill showed a profit. Jefferson became more and more convinced that he could make another course pay. Only, that is, if he had capital. How much would it really cost, he wondered. First, there'd be the problem of getting land.

That's when an idea hit him. He remembered his father-in-law's property. Why, he must have had a good 100 acres



Patsy Jefferson (right) has learned a great deal about turf and golf courses from Frank Gooch, the capable supt. at Guyan G & CC.

or so just a few miles from Huntington. Jefferson immediately drove to his wife's former home and looked over the surroundings. They seemed ideal although nearly all the land had been at one time or another plowed up and was quite overgrown. Right in the center of the acreage stood a large, two-story frame house which should easily convert into a clubhouse.

Jefferson got 65 acres from his father-in-law. Then he went to the bank and explained his ideas and problems. It wasn't long before he had enough to begin, but the outlook still was uncertain. There were tremendous debts over Patsy's head. He couldn't just break even his first year; he'd have to make money to repay his creditors.

That was Apr. 18, 1956. Work began the very next day. On May 15, 1957, the proud Jefferson opened his Riviera CC.

Success Overwhelming

His success since that time has been overwhelming. Golfers, hundreds of them, seemed to have been just waiting for such a course. Jefferson averaged a gross \$1,500 per week this summer. Most of it went into new equipment or for paying off debts. To date, he has put \$40,000 into his course and he borrowed all but \$6,000 of that.

The Riviera is located just six miles east of Huntington, adjacent to scenic West Virginia mountains and overlooks the beautiful Ohio. Its 36-par includes two par five holes and two par threes. The greens are said to be the best in the area. Jefferson credits Frank Gooch, supt.

Foundation Membership Grows

"Membership in the National Golf Foundation continues to grow," says Henry Cowen, pres., The MacGregor Co., and the Foundation's membership chmn. "Eight new companies have become members in the last six months, bringing total membership to 76."

New members are: Ernie Sabayrac, Inc., Hialeah, Fla.; Roseman Mower Corp., Evanston, Ill.; Lauman Golf Supply Co., Kitchener, Ont.; Northern Golf Ball Co., Chicago, Ill.; The Plastex Co., Columbus, O.; Norman G. Copland & Associates, Div. of Steel Sash Service, Inc., Chicago, Ill.; Rainy Sprinkler Sales, Peoria, Ill.; Par-Inc., Chicago, Ill.

Complete information on Foundation membership can be obtained from the National Golf Foundation, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5.

at Guyan G & CC of Huntington for this.

The future calls for expansion, of course. Patsy still hasn't decided whether to try to make his course an 18-hole layout or not, but does plan construction of a swimming pool eventually.

GCSA Makes Grants for Scholarships and Research

A total of \$1,900 in scholarships and research grants will be placed this year by the GCSA Scholarship and Research Fund. Directors of the organization have awarded a \$400 Scholarship to Purdue University, two \$100 Scholarships to Pennsylvania State University and four separate research grants.

Continuing a program started in 1951 at UCLA, that school will get a second research grant of \$250.00 for work on Kikuyugrass control. The Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station at Tifton will receive a \$250 research grant as will Kansas State College at Manhattan. These latter are placed in the field of general turf research. In a more specialized field, a \$500 grant will be made to the University of Wisconsin for nematode research.

This will mark the third year of operation of the GCSA Scholarship and Research Fund.

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