



One of Florida's Finest

Belvedere Short Course Long on Beauty

THE rather phenomenal early success of the Par 3 Belvedere GC in West Palm Beach, Fla., is not entirely due to the excellent 18-hole course that Henry Lindner, the pro-manager, designed, and put into play last December. The rich atmosphere of the pro shop, lounge, grille and area surrounding the course has had a great deal to do in attracting thousands of golfers as well as quite a large sprinkling of non-players to the golfing center.

In February and March, probably the peak months for Florida golf in any form, Belvedere had a total of 8,000 persons register to play. Since Florida is becoming almost as much of an off-season as a regular season tourist mecca, the West Palm Beach center will be kept open the year around. It is, of course, too early to tell just how well business will fare in the summertime but Lindner and his partners, R. C. Mathews and John S. Bransford, are quite optimistic since they have already found that warm nights induce heavy play under the lights. The 8,000 playing figure mentioned above was recorded almost exclusively as the result of daytime activity.

Opening Day Fanfare

Belvedere was opened last Dec. 1 with the kind of fanfare that not only brought a large crowd out for the ribbon cutting ceremonies, but prompted those who couldn't be on hand to put the club down in their "future" book. A good deal of newspaper and even some TV advertising preceded opening day, Sam Snead was brought in for an exhibition, and a hole-in-one contest, with proceeds going to charity, was promoted by the local newspapers during the first nine days the course was in operation. Altogether, 4,000 golf balls were hit during the contest and one of these found its way into the cup. This promotion was so well received that the newspapers plan to continue it as an annual event. The publicity, of course, won't do Belvedere GC any harm.

The length of the course has been in-

creased from 2,300 to 2,500 yards in recent weeks through the extension of several tees all of which are now from 100 to 125 ft. long. Only two of the 18 holes are under 100 yards. The yardage range is from 89 to 163. Greens average from 4,000 to 5,000 sq. ft. in area and all are quite sharply, or at least, interestingly contoured. Everglades #1 is used on greens and Ormond on tees and fairways. Belvedere is completely irrigated with a two acre lake serving as a water source. A 40 hp, 500 gal. per minute pump supplies the sprinkling system.

Mounds Are Hazards

Belvedere doesn't have any traps in the interest of keeping play moving resolutely on all holes, but Lindner did build in what he considers adequate hazards as substitutes for sand. These are rather large mounds which call for quite accurate hitting to get over or around them and usually extract stiff penalties when golfers bounce shots off them.



Tastefully displayed golfwear is big secret behind Belvedere's substantial shop sales.



Large bank of windows in two walls of shop give excellent illumination. Fixtures are of frosted rattan, wall at rear is covered with plastic grass cloth.



Lunchroom and lounge (not shown) are blend of cypress and hand-rubbed green plaster walls.



Hat and accessory bar has become a Florida golf shop trademark. Northern pros are beginning to appreciate its strong sales impact.

The driving range at Belvedere is 270 yards deep and 150 yards wide. Its crescent shape tee is more than 90 yards long and about 20 yards wide. Activity here is almost as great as on the course. During the winter four teaching pros were kept busy on the range giving lessons. The range is lighted as well as the first 9 holes. All wiring is underground, leading to 43 light standards that, in typical Florida fashion, are either royal or coconut palms.

Beauty Indoors

Indoors, Belvedere GC is just a little more imposing than it is outside. The lounge (not shown in the photos) is carpeted from wall to wall and walls are of cypress and hand rubbed pale green plaster. Lamps here were imported from Italy and the furniture was made in Denmark.

In the golf shop, all fixtures are of white frosted rattan. The wall on which clubs

are displayed is covered with plastic grass cloth and there is a profusion of spots to give interesting lighting effects to all merchandise displays. Sportswear gets a large and steady play from customers while club business, stimulated by Belvedere's teaching staff, has proved to be larger than originally hoped for. The pro shop, incidentally, is set up so that all players coming from the 200-car parking lot have to pass through it on their way to the course or range.

Belvedere also has a sandwich bar in which cypress and rattan predominate.