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Golf Therapy Plays Big Part in Rehabilitation at S.C. Vets Hospital

A six-hole Par 3 course with 30 ft. circular greens has been completed on the grounds of the Columbia, S. C. VA Hospital, the result of a suggestion made by a former golf professional patient, Johnny Spence, who also planned and helped lay it out.

During his hospitalization, Spence, who



Walter Carnes, therapist, Mrs. W. M. Daniel, UVS volunteer worker, John L. Wilson, a patient, and Pro Johnny Spence enjoy a round at Columbia VA Hospital course.

is now promoting the Southern Hills club in Columbia, worked on a design for the Par 3 and then "sold" it to the hospital management. Although he didn't sacrifice true Par 3 quality, Spence's main interest in the project was prompted by a desire to contribute specifically to the therapeutic program.

Emphasize Safety

Special emphasis was placed on safety factors. The compact course is arranged so that 24 to 28 patients can play without danger of being struck by a ball. Distance between holes varies from 60 to 75 yards and distance from a green to the next tee is approximately 75 yards. These factors provide more walking exercise as well as safety.

The hospital's golf therapy program has been of great value in the treatment of NP patients. They thoroughly enjoy the game and the outside activity and participate enthusiastically. Most of them have never played before but many say they expect to continue playing after they return home.

The golf program also has proved valuable in treatment of newly-blind patients since it promotes their self-confidence, group activity and morale.