



Sixth and adjoining holes at Little Creek, Va., base. At right is Tom Whillock, pro.

Eagles Move Over; Demolition Squad Builds A Course

By **TOM FERGUSSON**
Norfolk, Virginia — Pilot

Officers and enlisted men are justifiably proud of the 18-hole Eagle Haven GC at the Little Creek (Va.) Amphibious Training Base.

The Eagle Haven course grew up last fall. It became of age, so to speak. Nine holes were added to the original layout, constructed in 1955. The new nine was completed just short of 14 months after the project was undertaken.

Before the Seabees got down to business, the tract of land that was to be known as Eagle Haven, was nothing but sand dunes and marsh. The original 9 was opened in 1955 and quickly took its place in Tidewater golf. Tommy Whillock, one of Virginia's ranking amateurs, turned professional and took the post at Eagle Haven.

Trial and Error

Russell Jernigan, head mechanic of the Public Works at Little Creek, was assigned the task of drawing plans for the new course. Whillock assisted and while it was something new to both, they tackled the job like veterans and turned out a beautiful product. Sometimes work was slow, since trial and error methods were used.

The course had 5,000 rounds the first six months of 1955; jumped to 14,577 the

following year, and to 14,800 in 1957. After 17,855 rounds were played in 1958, Special Services saw the great need of an additional nine.

Construction began in 1958. Hundreds of seabees manned the giant bulldozers and went to work with enthusiasm. The Underwater Demolition training unit handled the job.

Lt. Cmdr. Larry McCall, chmn. of the golf committee, was a daily spectator. Capt. Smythe expressed a desire to play the new layout in its entirety before he was transferred to another command, but he never got the chance to play the complete 18 holes.

Woods Replace Shovels

In October 1959, the seabees, many of whom are ardent golfers, parked the bulldozers, tossed aside their shovels, hoes and rakes, and supplemented them with woods and irons.

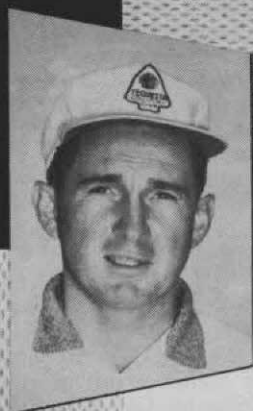
Eagle Haven, now a full-grown golf course, took its place beside other service courses in the Tidewater area — the Commissioned Officers' Club, at nearby Norfolk, and the Langley Air Base course at Langley Field, Va.

Newcomers to Little Creek often ask how Eagle Haven got its name. That's unique. Long before the course was built, even before Uncle Sam decided to build a training base, eagles nested there.

A pair established a home in one of the towering pines. This pair returned yearly, nesting in the tall pine tree.

Eagles still hover over the course, gliding over the golfers like huge planes which take off at the nearby Norfolk Municipal Airport.

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Eagles Move Over and A Course is Built

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Eagle Haven is open to all members of the Armed Forces, active and retired, their dependents and friends. Dues are \$5 monthly, \$6.50 for the family. Daily fees for non-members are \$1, Saturdays and Sundays \$1.50.

Lateral Water Hazards

The courses measures 6,200 yards and borders on the Atlantic Ocean. Sand traps are numerous and there are no less than 12 lateral water hazards. Lakes front five of the 18 holes, making it a tricky course, but not one to discourage those who shoot in the 90-100 bracket. Par is 35-35-70.

Whillock picks the 390-yard, par 4 seventh hole as the toughest. "The hole is a dogleg to the right, bounded by water and trees on the left and right of the fairway," he says. "The green also is elevated."

Since the course opened in 1955, more than 77,500 golfers have played on the sporty government reservation.

Dick Bury, former golf professional from Detroit, now doing a stint in the Navy, serves as Whillock's assistant.

You, Too, Can Shoot 90

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ing or trying to hit too hard. Jim and his pupil agreed that her maximum comfortable range with the club was about 75 yards.

In lessons that followed, the same procedure was followed with clubs ranging down to the 5-iron. The keynote was accuracy with distance being considered only a secondary factor. By the time the woman pupil had played down to the 5-iron, it was found that she could get about 120 yards with that club and have a reasonable chance of coming close to the target area.

All during this time, no mention was made of the woods. But through the series, Gantz noted that the woman was gaining more confidence with each lesson. Automatically, she began to assume the correct stance. Her timing with each club improved rapidly whether she chipped or took a half swing or went the whole route.

No Trouble With Woods

When it came time for a session with the woods, it didn't surprise Gantz when Mrs. T. started hitting them with authority. After three or four swings with a 2-wood, she began putting the ball out nearly 160 yards.