

## Thomas, New GCSA President, Is 45-Year Golf Veteran

James Edmund Thomas, new pres. of the GCSA, was born in Baird, Tex., Oct. 14, 1898, and started in golf on Christmas Day, 1914.

Jimmy's debut in the game was as a caddie at the San Antonio CC when Barney Kelley was pro and Allan A. Wyman was assistant and caddiemaster. When Wyman became pro at San Antonio, Thomas was hired as his assistant and as caddiemaster. In 1919 Jimmy went to Dallas CC as assistant to William Mac-



Kenzie. He stayed there until 1922 when he went as pro-supt. to the Swope Park course in Kansas City, Mo.

In 1928 he went to Glenhaven CC (now Glen Lakes) at Dallas as pro-supt. His next move was to Dodge Park in Council Bluffs, Ia. where he was pro-supt. from 1932 through 1938. Then he took over at Nordic Hills CC in the Chicago district as pro-supt. in 1939 and stayed there until January 1942 when he went to Hillcrest CC in New Kensington, Pa., as pro-supt.

By that time Thomas was established as one of the country's top men in a combination job. He was an excellent golf instructor and player and a staunch promoter of the game. He had an impressive record of managing courses and maintaining them in fine condition on moderate budgets. He was highly regarded by club officials and members as a fellow with executive capacity who could do difficult work in emergencies and train first class staffs. Thomas was active in sectional associations of supts. as a member and official and as a turf scholar, speaker and instructor at many short courses on maintenance.

### Served in Persia

In July, 1942, Jimmy went into the Army, being assigned to a railroad outfit in the Persian Gulf Command. Suffering in heat that never was under 120 in the middle of the day, Jimmy again demonstrated that he was a reliable and expert performer. He kept at that arduous, important job until the war ended.

Thomas came back to his golf career in 1946 as supt., Farmington CC, Charlottes-

ville, Va. He served in that capacity for two years, then was signed as supt. by the Army-Navy CC, Arlington, Va. where he now is in charge of course maintenance.

Thomas was president of the Mid-Atlantic GCSA in 1959. His Mid-Atlantic comrades fittingly enough, welcomed him home from Houston as the GCSA president with a gala dinner.

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## "This Is Your Life, O. J. Noer," Enacted at GCSA Banquet

(See photo on page 35)

The huge Emerald Room of the Shamrock Hilton Hotel was filled to the last table setting for the GCSA's annual banquet which was held on Feb. 4. The fare was excellent and the entertainment, featuring Shep Fields and his Rippling Rhythm Orchestra and Revue, was considered by most greenmasters and their wives to be even better. Particularly titillating was a comic, Pete Pedersen, a harmonica virtuoso, who interspersed his rhapsodies with a wide and colorful variety of anecdotes. He followed Jennifer Marshall, an outflowing chanteuse, who gave two or three balding supts. in the down-front tables a few uncomfortable moments with her attentions, but shrewdly glided away when she sensed that their spouses

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### 1961 Convention in Canada

The 1961 GCSA convention will be held in the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, Ont. Said to be the largest hotel in the British commonwealth, it has more than 1,600 rooms. Next year's convention will be held, Jan. 29- Feb. 4.

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weren't taking kindly to her blandishments. Thereafter, she sang, somewhat in the manner of Hildegarde.

But the real piece of de resistance came after the entertainment was over. It was a "This Is Your Life" enactment of the career of O. J. Noer, the Milwaukee Sewerage agronomist, to whom the GCSA convention was dedicated and who is retiring this year. With Warren Lafkin slipping into the role of Ralph Edward, it was revealed among other things that those initials, O. J., stand for Oyvind Juul. Using slides, Lafkin traced Noer's life, practically from the first day on to the very eve of the banquet when O. J. was pho-

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of supts. and their assistants because some are only employed seasonally while others have houses and sometimes utilities provided as a supplement to their income. Many now have expense accounts. Records kept during the past five years represent total earnings per 12 month year regardless of the actual working contract. They include a nominal allowance for housing and other benefits, where applicable. During this period the average starting salary for graduates of the turf major course of study (regardless of type of starting position) was \$4280 per year. This figure represents a range from \$2900 to \$6500 per year. With from one to five year's experience after graduation, the average salary was \$5450 per year, which represents a range from \$2900 to \$8500 per year. One-third of these men earned from \$3000-\$4000 per year; one-fourth from \$5000-\$6000; one-fourth from \$6000-\$7000 and one-sixth more than \$7000. It is not possible to compare the average earnings from different classes following varying years of experience since no two groups completing the course have been composed of men with similar potentialities. Thus, some advanced more rapidly than others.

## "This Is Your Life, O. J. Noer"

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tographed bedded down under a Texas Sombrero with a glass of his favorite herbicide in his hand.

Between these photos, Noer was shown as a 12-year-old chicken farmer, the manager of his high school basketball team, a college graduate, Chemical warfare major (World War I), a bridegroom (he was married in 1919 to Julia Carvel Anderson), and thereafter in various stances as an agronomist on the plow for nematodes, sitting astride a tractor or in his laboratory activating sludge. Lafkin revealed that Noer's greatest contribution to mankind was not, as you would expect, in the field of agronomy but in the compounding of a beverage, while he was serving in France in the first World War, in which the atom was split for the first time. Happily, it was intended to be consumed and not dropped.

The climax of the Noer episode came when his daughter, Mrs. Dirk van der Burch, and her three children, Dirk II, Nancy and Sara, who had been flown in from Palo Alto, Calif., made a dramatic entry into the Emerald Room for a reunion with O. J. and Mrs. Noer.