



(Above) Pro George Zimmerman of Cottonwood CC and Marcheta Moorman, daughter of the course architect, discuss clubs. Paneling is from trees felled during construction. (Below) Bill Mast (l) built Carlton Oaks and Charley Rizzo is the pro there.



A Break for San Diego's Fee Players

The City of San Diego Is Adding First Class Courses As Part of Its Recreational Program and is Taking the Congestion Out of Golf

The Response: 168,000 Rounds Were Played at a Single Course in '61 . . . and Money's Pouring into the City's General Fund

BY HOWARD HAGEN

San Diego Union Golf Writer

Public course golfers are getting a break in San Diego County.

They are playing on new, spectacular, tree-dotted layout that is nicer than most private courses in the area. They can choose two seaside courses or several inland layouts of equal beauty and interest. There's no difficulty getting on them, even on weekends.

Newest, and perhaps the prettiest of the county's fee layouts is Cottonwood CC, about 16 miles east of San Diego.

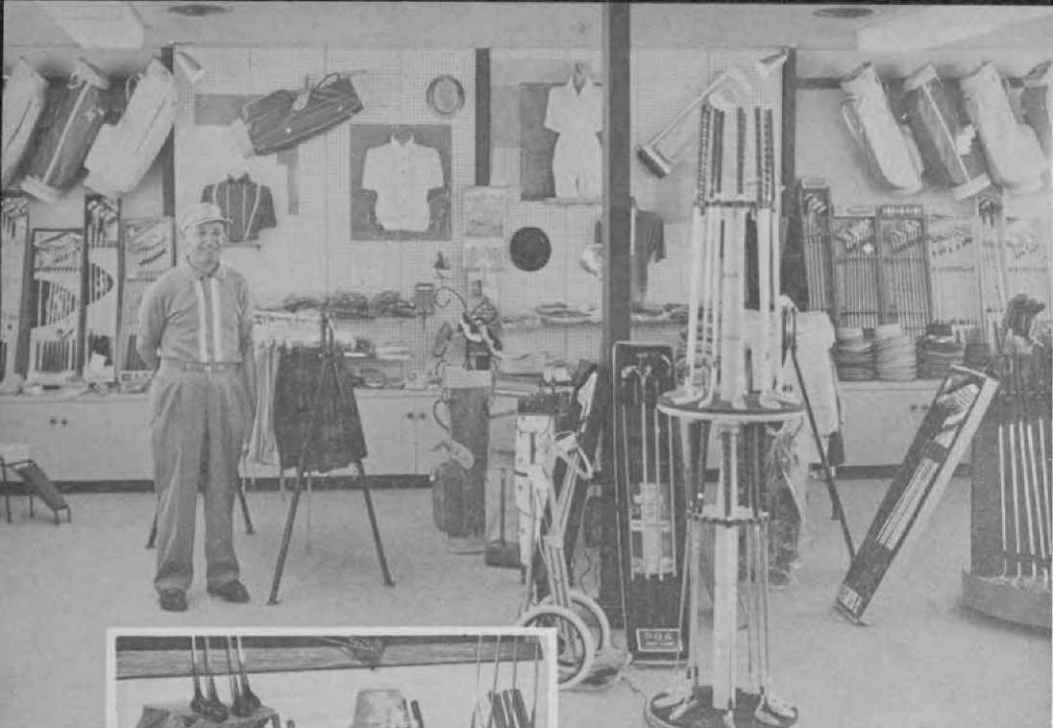
It's a spectacular course with 3,000 cottonwood and sycamore trees. The main course has the county's only par 73 and there also is an adjoining nine-hole layout.

It took President Bud Sears and architect and vice president Spud Moorman, only 1½ years to build them, and the first four months were needed for clearing the river bottom land. Sears figures the course was constructed at less than half of the cost of most courses because all the work was done by their own crews and machinery.

There are 23 people on the Cottonwood payroll. Pros Cliff Crandall, Lynn Meyers and George Zimmerman are kept busy in the new pro shop, which uses attractive wood from the course for paneling.

Favors Huge Tees

In the first month of operation, Cottonwood averaged 190 players a day. Says Sears: "If properly run, I'm convinced public courses can be a real paying propo-



Pro Frank Rodia is seen amid colorful displays of Torrey Pines shop. (Inset) Stumps from native trees are used for showing clubs at Cottonwood.

Touch of Beauty . . .

sition. We have stressed flexibility in our design. Because of huge tees and greens our yardage can vary by 1,000 yards. I can't stress enough the importance of building huge tees, from the standpoint of maintenance and golf as well.

"Our players also appreciate the fact we have virtually no parallel fairways. This helps speed play. Our foursomes never take more than 4½ hours to get around, and some of them are under four hours."

Cottonwood, like the other San Diego County courses, is a year-round operation. The maintenance people mow continually and water every night.

Nearly 30 miles away from Cottonwood, on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean, are the two regulation Torrey Pines links operated by the City of San Diego.

Shooting For the Open

On the order of Pebble Beach, they have spectacular vistas. The North course is routine but the South is perhaps the most difficult in the County. San Diego has in-

(Continued on page 76)



Broken branch frames tee at Cottonwood and brook there is rock bound.



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San Diego Muny Courses

(Continued from page 26)

vited the USGA to hold the U.S. Open there in 1965 or 1967, and the California Public Links week-long tournament will be held at Torrey Pines South this month.

There are 25 employees, including 19 in maintenance, at Torrey Pines. Mowing and watering also are continuous here. No reservations are required to play on weekdays; reservations are made each Monday and Tuesday for the following Saturday and Sunday.

Even so, about 25 per cent of the week-end starting times are kept open so singles and doubles have little trouble getting on. This fact is not lost on many golfers who come down from Los Angeles and outlying cities to play San Diego's fee courses.

Private Firm Builds Clubhouse

A private concern is building a new clubhouse and 70 motel units at Torrey Pines and expects to have them completed by the middle of the month. All players will have access to the clubhouse, Olympic-size pool and other facilities.

In its first five years of operation, Torrey Pines had 618,023 paid rounds and more than \$1 million was turned over to the City of San Diego's general fund.

Veteran pro Frank Rodia, who has held both private and fee course positions, heads Torrey Pines' five-pro staff. Says Rodia:

"Fee courses get heavier play, but I've found they spend less than private club players for pro shop goods on a per capita basis. Where I sell a \$19.95 sweater here, it may have been a \$60 one in a private club. In the old days we didn't sell clothes in our shops. The pros were clubmakers, teachers and club sellers, and also had to know something about greenkeeping.

Competing with Downtown

"I believe pro shop people can sell at the same price as downtown sporting goods stores and still make a profit. There's this difference, too: A fellow buys a set of clubs downtown, uses it five or six times and wants to trade it in. The downtown people usually don't take trade-ins. We pros should stress the advantages of dealing with the pro shops. If the guy had been fitted properly for clubs, he wouldn't be wanting to trade them in so soon. And I want to stress there's nothing sold downtown we can't sell at the same price for the same profit."

The Municipal (downtown) course is one of San Diego's oldest layouts. It has 27 holes and gets steady play with about the same reservation setup as Torrey Pines.

Head pro Harry McCarthy's shop recently was enlarged and beautified. McCarthy says, "We have added 300 feet to the shop and believe business will improve correspondingly. We have four new showcases and the lighting has been improved." McCarthy gives about 450 lessons a year besides overseeing the shop.

Green Fee Gross \$200,000

Muni had 163,800 paid rounds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1961, and the current fiscal year should be about the same. Green fees grossed \$200,000 in the 1961 fiscal year. Maintenance is handled by 13 men, fairways are mowed twice weekly (the greens three times a week). Patrolling is a problem, though, because the course, situated in the middle of town, is not fenced. Twenty-five people, not counting the leased restaurant operation employees, operate Muni.

Carlton Oaks Country Club in Santee, a San Diego suburb, is another link recently opened to public play. It's owned by Bill Mast, Los Angeles developer. Charlie Rizzo is head pro.

It's a river-bottom layout cut out of brush and tall trees, and on the order of Cottonwood, offers many excellent shots. As at Cottonwood, the architect has made good use of existing trees in building a challenging layout.

Clubhouses on Boards

Carlton Oaks has a par 72, lots of dog-legs and some spectacular water shots. Cottonwood and Carlton Oaks have clubhouses on the drawing boards. Carlton Oaks eventually may revert to private status.

In addition to the courses named, San Diego County has four other public courses and four public pitch-putt places where the fee player can sharpen his game.

A new \$750,000 Par 58 public course is under construction in Mission Bay, and another course of that length will be built soon by Sam Snead and associates in the northern section of the city.

There also are six "semi-public" courses where the fee player usually can get on; seven private courses, where fee players often are guests of members, and two regulation and two short courses restricted to San Diego's many service people, active and retired.

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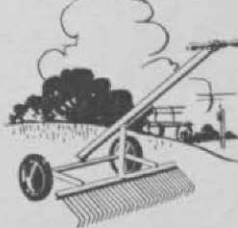
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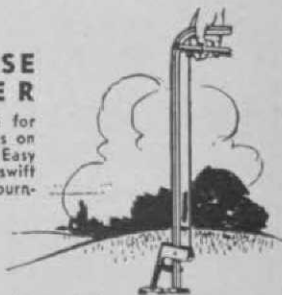


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