



Golfer's Paradise!

*The Grand Bahama Hotel boasts
it has the closest thing to it*

***Beauty, wonderful weather, excellent turf and relaxed golf
are among the lures this resort course has to offer***

Golf is moving swiftly to the front in helping attract tourists to the burgeoning Bahamas. The latest addition in courses is the championship layout at the Jac Tar Grand Bahama Hotel.

Located only 55 miles east of Palm Beach and Florida's Gold Coast, the Hotel property covers 2,000 acres with nine miles of private beach.

In addition to the beautiful course, the Hotel has a marina capable of berthing 100 yachts up to 125 feet, some of the finest fishing in the world, a trap and skeet range, a \$50,000 bowling lane, the largest swimming pool in the Western Hemisphere, measuring 185 feet by 95 feet, skin diving in translucent waters, tennis courts and practically every other form of entertainment operated by Billy Butlin, an English resort man. Since then the Tar interests have spent more than \$5,000,000 in improvements.

Supplies Shipped In

Under the direction of Ed C. Leach pres., the go-ahead on the golf course was given on May 29, 1959. Mark Mahannah was the architect. Construction work was done under the supervision of Watt Clark.

Built on a base of coral and limestone rock, the course is a work of ingenuity and taxing logistics. Every ounce of

supplies that went into it, from bolts and nuts to fertilizer, had to be shipped in by boat or air.

If a piece of machinery broke down it meant a delay of untold hours. On the other hand nature lent an unexpected and helping hand. It was found that the limestone rock, when blasted from the yacht basin and crushed, was amazingly rich in the basic elements needed to grow grass. Mixed with rich top soil, it has produced excellent turf.

Happy About This

"We were both amazed and delighted with this development," says Ed Hunt, managing director, who along with Leach was instrumental in pushing the work from the start. Formerly manager of the Jack Tar Harrison in Clearwater, Hunt has many friends among top flight golfers and maintenance men who were very helpful in offering long distance advice.

Drawing on his experience in designing money outstanding Florida courses, Mahannah dug in and work progressed rapidly. The first nine was opened Sept. 12, 1960, and the second nine put into play the following February.

With the even climate, an average of 78 degrees year round, and water no problem, the Tifton 328 Bermuda grass took



There's water, water everywhere at the Grand Bahama Hotel course as the golfer encounters seven Lakes in making the 18-hole round.



(Above) Reconversion plant filters 50,000 to 75,000 gals. of water a day, feeds it to lakes on the fifth and sixth holes. (Right) This is one of three traps at the eighth green. Clubhouse in background resembles Tara Hall of "Gone With the Wind" fame.



Persons who have seen No. 2 fairway and green say the scene reminds them of Pebble Beach's 17th.



root and grew at an amazing rate of speed.

Besides two nature-made lake reservoirs there is a reconversion plant producing between 50,000 and 75,000 gals. a day. The reconverted water pours into lakes at the 5th and 6th holes. The other lakes offer approximately the same amount of water daily.

The rainy seasons run from Mar. through June and from Sept. through Oct. The average rainfall at Grand Bahama is 50 ins. a year. On many Bahama islands water is brackish. On some islands drinking water must be shipped in. At Grand Bahama the supply is unlimited.

Average length of tees is 50 yds. Greens range from 10,000 to 15,000 square feet. From back tees the course will play longer than 6,900 yds. Ordinary island courses do not offer such expansiveness due to lack of land. But with unlimited acreage at his disposal, Mahannah took full advantage of the potentialities and a course with plenty of elbow room is the result.

Pirates and Astronauts

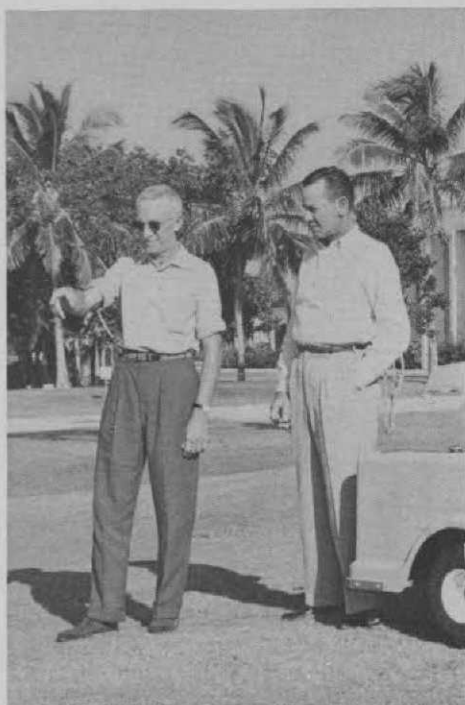
Grand Bahama Island is approximately 93 miles long and 15 miles wide at its widest. It is rich in legend. First came pirates such as Blackbeard, Henry Morgan and Black Caesar. Then came blockade runners such as the fictional Rhett Butler of Civil War days. In the '20's the Capone and other gangs made Grand Bahama their rum running headquarters. In recent years the astronauts, Shepard and Grissom, have appeared.

The Jack Tar properties occupy the extreme and narrow west end of the island. The Grand Bahama Hotel course is on the south and Gulf Stream side of the immediate Hotel property. The second hole borders the Gulf Stream and is reminiscent of Pebble Beach's famed 17th hole. The second at Grand Bahama drops into the deep purple of the Gulf Stream.

Although the land generally is flat, several holes have undulating fairways as a result of earth moving. These holes offer a wide variety of fairway shots as do the immense greens on which pins can be placed at several strategic spots on different levels.

Seven Lakes

There are seven lakes in the playing area. The second nine circles well fields containing more than 100 shallow wells that bring an unlimited supply of water from the water basin protected by limestone rock. There is no problem with pH because of the underlying ledges of lime-



Dale Weitzel, Grand Bahama supt. (l) points out an interesting feature to Mark Mahannah, who designed Hotel course.

stone rock, which gives an alkaline reaction. In the States courses buy carloads of crushed limestone to spread on fairways. At Grand Bahama it is to be had for the asking.

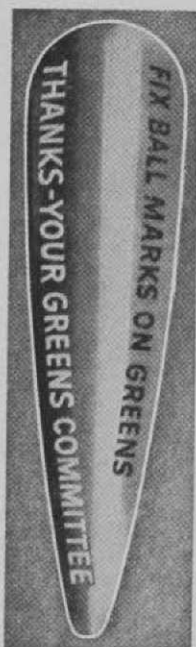
Faced with the problem of rock in roughs, construction crews crushed and pulverized the native limestone by walking the tracks of a 27-ton rock plow.

In the States regularly maintained 18-hole course turf areas average 92 acres. At Grand Bahama, 115 acres are maintained. With the well field and planting between fairways taken into consideration the course covers approximately 165 acres.

Weitzel Is Greenmaster

Dale Weitzel, Supt., has a crew of 18 native workers on his payroll. Little more than two years ago these men were simple fishermen and small scale farmers. But they caught on fast to the way things are done in the States. They take extreme pride in their work and under Weitzel's direction have become a well-knit crew.

A native of Detroit, Weitzel returned to the Forest Lake CC, Bloomfield Hills, Mich., after serving overseas with the
(Continued on page 86)



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much easier to play good golf. He told of buying one of the first wedges, at George Sayers' shop at Merion in 1930 during the National Amateur and finding out that it could become a magic wand. When the wedge design was revised, Little liked the new construction, too, and used it effectively in winning four consecutive U.S. and British Amateurs and the 1940 National Open.

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(Continued from page 26)

Canadian army. In 1956 he joined a syndicate headed by ex-Open champion, Jack Fleck, which purchased the old Brooklands CC near Detroit. When the syndicate sold the property, Weitzel came to Florida during the construction of the Palm River CC at Naples. Later he had a short association with Mahannah at Riviera CC, Miami. From Dec., 1959 until June, 1961, he was supt. at the new Sombrero Yacht and CC, Marathon, Fla.

Les Cottrell, head pro at Grand Bahama, is a member of both the U. S. and British PGA. A Briton by birth, Cottrell was connected with clubs around Boston for several years. He is a retired U. S. Air Force Colonel. After World War II he was

associated with the PGA Dunedin course.

Ordinarily men who know golf well back new courses. Their knowledge lends aid to building and operations problems. But with the Jack Tar head men it is the reverse. Ed Leach had never played golf before 1959. Neither had Charles A. Sammons, chairman of the board of Jack Tar Hotels and its principal stockholder. Ed Hunt's experience was limited. Leach and Sammons took up the game and made a study of it.

"I guess the course made us, as golfers anyway, instead of our making the course," Leach said during one of his recent visits to the property. All in all, he has twelve hotels under his direction, spreading from Texas to California to Lansing, Mich. and down through the Carolinas and Florida.

Future plans call for home sites to be developed on the hotel property which has an overall value of approximately \$12 million. The sites will border the golf course and look out on the Gulf Stream and the Atlantic Ocean.

The course will receive its first big test when a pro-celebrity tournament is held on Mar. 26-28. Bob Toski is in charge of rounding up talent for what promises to be an annual and lavish event.