

# Here's A First!



3,230 Yards Illuminated

## Standard Length New Jersey Club Goes Under Arcs

By RON STREIBICH

**A** step toward solving one of golf's major headaches of not enough hours for play and extremely congested courses was made at the end of August with the opening in Sewell, N.J., of the world's first lighted regulation-length golf course. The pioneering lighting installation seems certain to trigger a nationwide trend to golf at night.

Tall Pines CC, 18 miles southeast of downtown Philadelphia, has lighted its existing nine-hole, 3230-yard, par-35 links. The layout is the first regulation-length type to be illuminated. Other floodlighted courses are miniatures, pitch-n-putts and Par-3s which do not offer the full wood shots and long par-4 and -5 holes.

Illuminating the links are 121 General Electric 1000-watt clear and color-improved mercury floodlights. Engineers concede the lighting isn't quite as good as that of daytime, but the white ball reflects light well, making it stand out against the black sky and green grass. The floodlights project 10 "footcandles" on the tees and greens and five "footcandles" on the fairways. Most main downtown streets are lighted to one "footcandle".

Instead of sinking at least \$200,000 into a new nine, Tall Pines owners, Peter



Ten "footcandles" of illumination shine on this golfer as he pounds one out of a Tall Pines trap. This isn't quite the equal of midafternoon lighting, but it comes close to it. (Right) The Pete McEvoy's, father and son, own and operate the country's first standard lighted course.

McEvoy and his son, Pete, Jr., decided to spend \$63,000 to light their present nine. They figure to draw a multitude of local people who want to avoid the weekend delays or play during the week, after work and dinner. The course will be open to the 10,000 members of area PGA clubs at night and during the day confined to Tall Pines' 300 members.

"The technical and economic success of Tall Pines should encourage a nationwide string of illuminated courses which will make golf as much a nighttime endeavor as bowling, baseball, tennis, softball, football and all other spectator and participant sports," predicts Larry Dengler, manager of marketing for GE's Outdoor Lighting Dept., Hendersonville, N.C.

GE, a leader in the illumination of driving ranges, Par-3s and other golf facilities, recently introduced to the golf and electrical industries the idea of golf at night on regulation-length courses. This was done after special engineering and marketing teams determined that regulation night golf is technically feasible, economically advantageous and greatly needed.

#### This May Be The Solution

From the need standpoint, it was observed that during the past five years the already overcrowded game has experienced a 50 per cent rise in number of golfers, to around 5.25 million playing at least 15 rounds per year. During the same period there's been only about a 25 per cent increase in facilities. The obvious solution was to light existing courses and add golfing hours. This, it is reasoned, is

of much more benefit and is less expensive than buying additional land (if available) to construct new courses.

Studies show that any profit-motivated course can recoup its investment for a lighted nine in at least four years and thereafter earn a minimum of \$15,000 more per year. The McEvoy's term this estimate "extremely realistic."

Demonstration of advantages of night golf to course officials has resulted in many owners and operators ordering or planning to order lighting systems for installation in the near future, according to Dengler. The new idea is being considered by clubs of all types and location. Country clubs, privately-owned public courses and municipal layouts are all interested, especially the "munys" which comprise only 15 per cent of the country's courses but handle 40 per cent of the play. Courses in the South find it advantageous because of the many golfing nights per year. Northern operators are interested because their shorter season tempts people to play more golf.

#### Light Back Nine First

Dengler said some courses will consider illuminating 18 holes, but most will probably initially light the back nine. Private country clubs may first light only the last two or three holes, permitting members to play an hour longer each night.

Tall Pines has one par-5, six par-4 and two par-3 holes. The par-5 is 520 yards, making it the world's longest illuminated  
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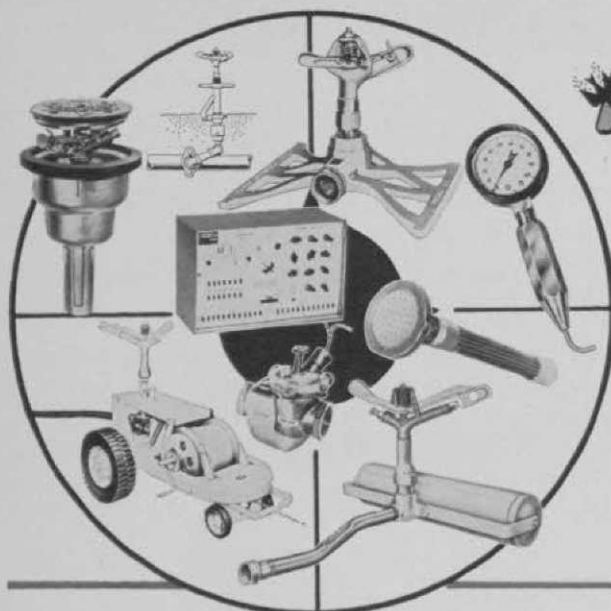
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## **Ladies PGA Stages Fourth Golf School in North Carolina**

The fourth annual national golf school of the Ladies PGA, held at the Women's College of the U. of North Carolina in Greensboro in July, attracted 64 students who came from 17 states and Canada. The five-day program was basically devoted to instruction, panel and individual discussions, the showing of films and play under tournament conditions. Leading LPGA players, including Mickey Wright and Kathy Whitworth, served as instructors. The school was run under the supervision of Ellen Griffin, connected with the Women's College, and Shirley Spork.

A new feature was introduced for this year's school. It was a model pro shop, operated by Myra Chastain, and stocked with equipment contributed by various manufacturers. To fully acquaint the students with equipment, the LPGA imported Boyd Jaeger, pro at Emerywood CC in High Point, N.C., to demonstrate how club repairs are made.

The student group was made up of college and university physical education teachers and representatives of civic organizations and country clubs.

## **Standard Club Under Lights**

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hole, besting the 420-yard hole which Brandywine in Niles, Mich. (Golfdom, May, p 106) successfully test-lighted. Tall Pines also lists a tough 420-yard par-4, a 415-yard par-4 and 215-yard par-3, in coming up with its 3230 yardage.

### **Isn't A Pushover**

The course is by no means easy, not only because of the lengthy holes, but because it has 28 deep "no-putt" traps, 1000 new trees and bushes, out-of-bounds on five holes, large rolling greens with tricky pin placements, and three-inch rough bordering the fairways and covering the first 150 yards of each hole. The course record at the five-year-old club is a two-under 33 for nine and three under 67 (33-34) for 18.

The beauty of the scenic course is not marred by the lighting. All wiring is underground and the wood poles blend in well with the surroundings. The floodlights are aimed down the fairway, out of the golfer's eyes and with their cast aluminum backs absorbing any wild shots. There is no bug problem.