Clubs Put New Accent on Junior Golf Program

There will be more attention paid to Junior golf development at first class clubs this year than ever before, according to indications from men and women officials and pros. Calling attention to the clubs' awareness of the importance of the Junior programs has accounted for considerable favorable publicity along the line of the story about the Marshfield (Mass.) CC plans that Ed Lyons recently wrote in the Brockton Enterprise and Times.

After interviewing Marshfield's president, Robert Semple, Jr., Lyons reported: "The junior golf program will be No. 1 insofar as President Semple is concerned. We believe' he says, 'that there should be more stress on our kids' play. We have an outstanding youngster in Brian McQuinn and may have a few other future greats. The kids should be encouraged."

Mobile Children's Course

Dennis Smitherman, sports editor of the Mobile Press, lauds the Mobile CC children's course as representing one of the club's very wise and foresighted moves. Here is what he says of the Junior course at Mobile CC:

• The Mobile club ever conscious of the part that youngsters play in a family's enjoyment of country club facilities, has made a move that could — or should — set a pattern for all other such organizations to follow. If, of course, if they have the acreage needed and a large membership which makes it a necessity.

The MCC, owning a fair-sized plot of ground in front of its handsome clubhouse structure, has, when possible, turned its course maintenance crew loose in this acreage and the latter has created a nine-hole golf course for use by the children of the members.

Right now, the nine holes are strictly an in-the-rough proposition. But, as time, materials and labor allow in the future, additional efforts will be made to sharpen and improve this short but still reasonably lengthy, 9-hole links for the club's small-fry.

Ideal in Spring and Fall

The nine holes have been laid out, and greens have been formed by the adroit use of rye (winter grass) seed. The cups and pins have been placed and the tees marked off. It's an ideal setup for the youngsters, particularly in the spring and early fall months when the MCC's big and always well-groomed 18-hole course gets such terrific play from its Senior and older Junior members on the weekends.

During those periods, when the real small-fry youngsters have only Saturday and Sunday off from school, there just isn't enough room for them to use the regulation course. And, the same is true on many days during the summer particularly again, the weekends, when traffic is so heavy.

As mentioned, time and additional labor will help improve the children's course at the MCC, which could eventually, under pro-supt., Joe Burch, Jr.'s direction, become a model for other clubs to go by.

May Attract Others

And, of course, since it does have a sufficient length (without being too long), it won't be a bit surprising nor unexpected to see a lot of lady golfers (especially beginners) and elderly linksmen, avail themselves of this smaller-size and less-demanding course.

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It won't surprise us a bit if a good many of tomorrow's local links standouts get their first taste of golf on the children's course now in use at the Mobile CC. Pres. Marshall DeMouy and his golf committee are definitely making wise use of this available acreage at their club, which is adjacent to the practice range, but far enough away so as not to present a danger to the youngsters •

Women Direct Kids 'Golf

There is a growing practice of appointing women members to top positions on Junior golf committees. The first time this policy was brought to the attention of Golfdom was when Bill Wotherspoon was professional at Southern Hills CC in Tulsa. Wotherspoon and other Oklahoma pros tried everything and, with their assistants, worked hard in their efforts to get boys' and girls' programs going at their clubs. But they weren't at all happy about results until the women's state golf organization began directing and pushing the Junior golf operations. It wasn't long after the Oklahoma Junior program was accented that Labron Harris, Ir. of Oakwood, Okla., won the National Amateur championship.

Since learning about women's successful work in boys' and girls' club programs in Oklahoma it has been noticed that that type of planning and supervising is growing and is adding considerably to club use. It is also proving to be good insurance and market development for the professional.

Juniorize Club Campaign Helps

The campaign to "Juniorize" used clubs and take them off the trade-in market is certain to give an additional boost to Junior golf programs at clubs.

Wise scheduling wipes out objections that older members of active clubs have voiced against Junior programs. The kids who are trained in etiquette and safety during pro classes, as well as educated in hitting and putting the ball, move right along on the course. The Juniors also are schooled in consideration for the course, being often reminded that others also play it.