

Building for better service

Here is a new multi-facet country club offering golf, swimming, tennis and skiing—a real year-round operation

By DAVID E. LABOUNTY

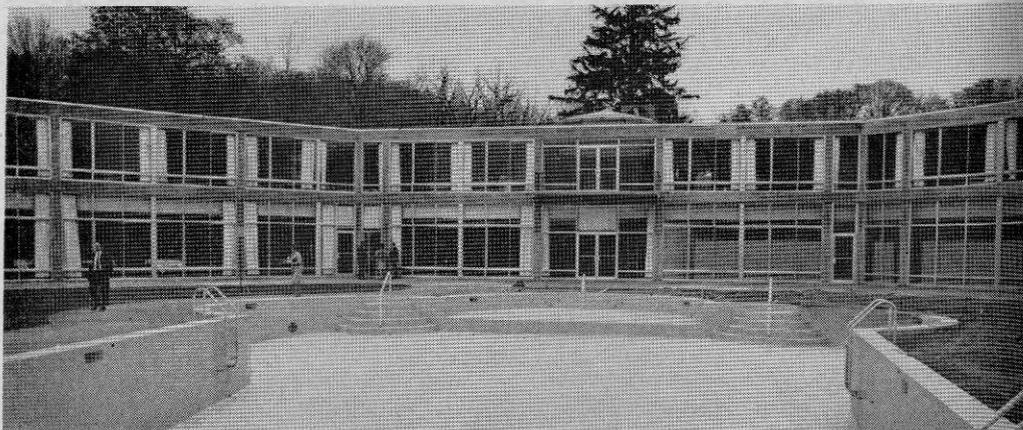
Today's country club member wants more than just an eight or nine-month club that only offers him an 18-hole golf course. He wants a year-round country club which will offer him and his family a complete service center that operates on a 12-month basis.

He wants a recreational complex that offers a swimming pool for summer and winter swimming; tennis courts; if possible, his wife would like some place to leave the kids without worry while she plays nine or 18 holes of golf, moreover, many golfers like to ski in the winter.

Just one hour from the middle of New York City, on a 175-acre tract of rocky terrain, verdant with all types of trees and shrubbery and dotted with small fresh wa-



A free-form wrought iron staircase with glass dome above, dominates entrance foyer. Rooms for members and guests are located in wings off the foyer.

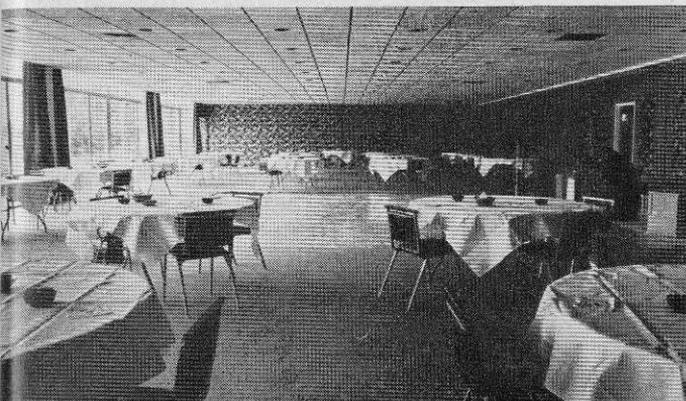


Back view of club house shows both levels. Top contains 40 motel-like rooms. Bottom contains dining room, locker rooms, pro shop, bar, all overlooking pool and course.



Above: Entrance to the club house is on the second level. A free form concrete cantilevered canopy extends out over steps.

Below: View of dining room which seats 450 people. Floor-to-ceiling windows on left afford a view of golf course and pool.



Left to right: Bud Woller, ski area manager; Lee Blauner, club manager; Harry L. Lewis, owner; and Pete Donnelly, club professional.

PHOTOS BY LEONARD KAMSLER.

ter ponds and rocky ravines, a unique \$2½ million country club just such as this has been carved.

The name of the club is Loch Ledge Golf and Country Club. It is located on Route 118 between Underhill Avenue on the north and Route 129 on the south, southwest of Yorktown Heights. It will be operated as a semi-private club.

Loch Ledge offers its members an 18-hole golf course, a modern clubhouse which incorporates an outdoor swimming pool, a pro shop, a huge dining room, two sauna baths, and 40 rooms of motel-like accommodations for its members and

their guests. Tennis courts will be added at a later date. A ski area with three trails and chairlift and the ski lodge are a five minute walk or one minute ride from the clubhouse.

The man behind this multi-facet complex is Harry L. Lewis, who is owner and operator. He has been in the golf course business for the past 25 years.

He built his first club, Gednes Golf Course, in Ridgeway which he sold. He then built Pine Ridge in Ossining and operated it up to a few years ago when he leased it to the members on a 99-year lease basis. The club is now called Hud-

continued on next page



Pete Donnelly, club pro, designed his own merchandise displays such as sweater rack and carousel skirt rack made from the wheel of a cart.

Motor-driven trolley conveys members to and from clubhouse and ski area.



LOCH LEDGE

continued from preceding page

son Hills, and Bob Murray, a long-time associate, is the general manager.

When asked why he decided to lease his old profitable club and build this new complex, he replied that he was "tired of paying taxes 12 months a year on a club that only operated eight of the 12 months." He also mentioned that today's member wants a club that offers him year-round recreational facilities.

The club officially opened on May 20th of this year, with over 200 members already signed up. Full membership will be approximately 300 members. Loch Ledge should have opened this time last year, but the old estate house that was to have been the clubhouse burned down.

"In some ways," Harry explained, "it was better this way. Now I was able to build a modern clubhouse exactly the way I wanted, incorporating a lot more modern features and services which I couldn't have if I would have had to renovate the old house. Besides, it's a lot more expensive to renovate than to build anew."

From the very beginning, every detail

in the design of Loch Ledge was thought out by Harry Lewis. When he ran into a problem, he called in his friend, Bob Murray. Together, they carefully plotted out the entire plans for the club—where the clubhouse with its cloverleaf patterned pool would be—where the ski lodge and ski runs would be—and just where the golf course would run. From ball washers to just how many glasses in the dining room would be needed was carefully figured out in advance.

Thus, knowing exactly what he wanted, Harry called in Nat Matson, Architect, of White Plains, N.Y., to draw up the plans for his spread-U-shaped clubhouse and converted ski lodge.

From a 400-car parking area, one enters the front entrance of the clubhouse into the reception room on the second level. The floors are covered with richly textured carpeting of turquoise, forest green and medium blue. On this floor, the draperies are matched to the medium blue.

To the left and right of the reception room on this second level are 40 motel-like sleeping rooms with twin beds, private showers, television and floor-to-ceil-

ing windows overlooking the surrounding landscape or pool, depending on which side of the building the rooms are located. There are also a few rooms which are to be used for meeting rooms for various outside business groups.

During the weekends, these rooms are

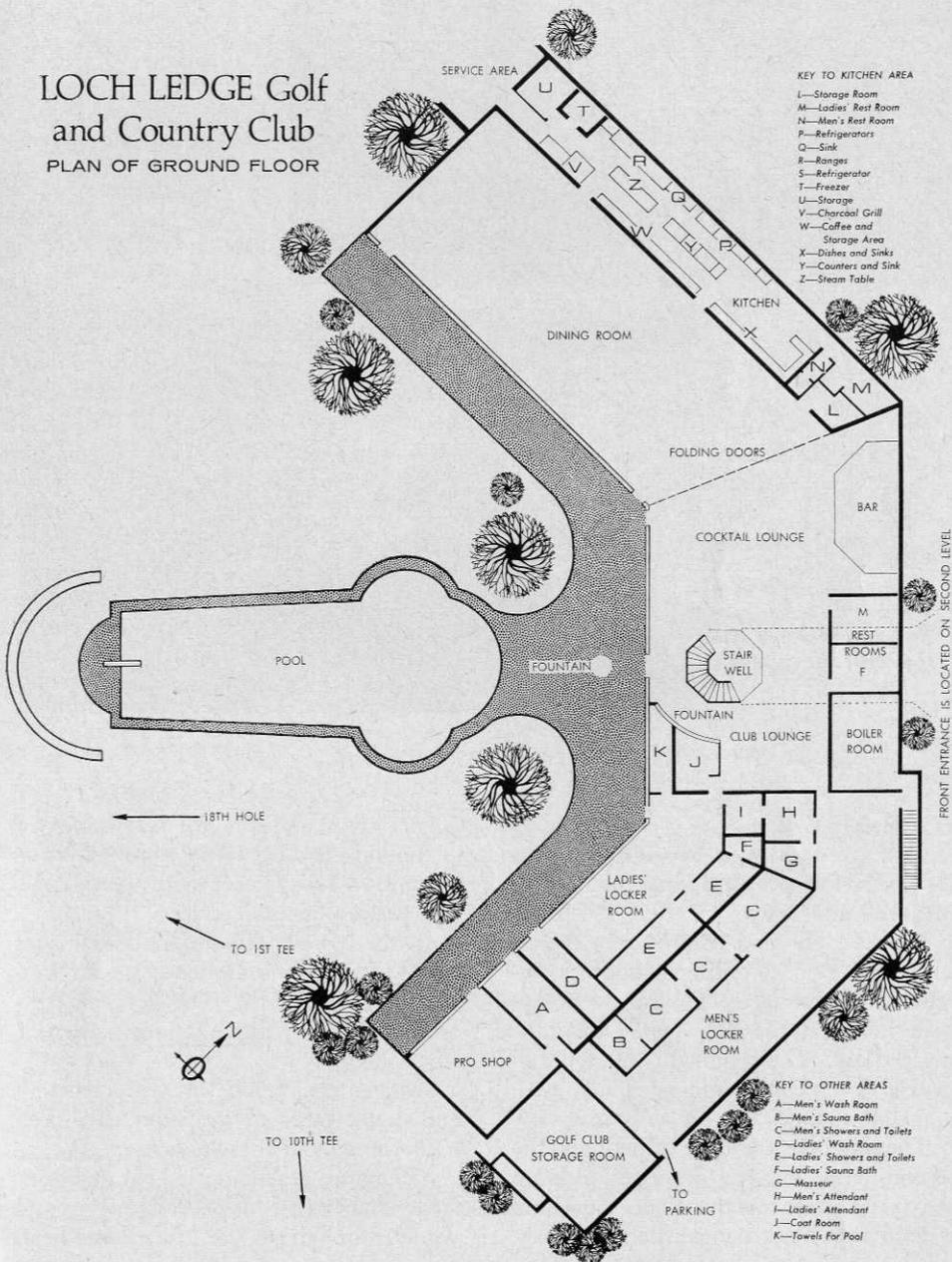
for the exclusive use of members and their guests. During the week, these rooms are open to the public.

One then descends a 26-foot wide circular, custom-made, two and one-half ton wrought iron staircase into the club lounge and cocktail lounge area, which will serv-

continued on next page

LOCH LEDGE Golf and Country Club

PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR





Barroom of ski lodge was originally the chapel of the estate. Left is walk-in fireplace. All windows throughout the barroom are made of stained glass.



Original Byzantine columns, fireplace and stone fountain with three bronze ladies have been incorporated into the ski lodge cafeteria.

LOCH LEDGE

continued from preceding page

ice up to 150 people during the day for breakfast and lunch.

To the right is a 42x200 foot dining room with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the pool area. Folding doors separate this from the club lounge area during the day. The room will seat approximately 450 people, and combined with the club lounge area, it will seat 600.

The room has the same carpeting as the second level, but the draperies pick up the forest green on this floor. Furniture is gold with black naugahyde upholstery.

Chairs are stackchairs for easy storage.

Running parallel to the dining room is an 18x116 foot kitchen with several exits which allow speedy service.

In the left wing, both the ladies' and men's locker rooms are located, each with its own sauna bath. The floors in this area are carpeted with a striped pattern of forest colors.

Altogether, 12,000 yards of carpeting and 4,200 yards of draperies have been used throughout the clubhouse.

The entire clubhouse is kept at a constant temperature of 70°, summer and winter, through the use of hydronic heat-

continued on page 54

LOCH LEDGE

continued from page 26

ing (use of hot water in the winter and cold water in the summer).

A flagstone walk contours the outside of the clubhouse and extends around the 35x100 cloverleaf-patterned pool. Plans call for a glass enclosure around the pool connecting with the clubhouse for winter swimming. The enclosure will be heated with gas infra-red heating.

In charge of all of this, is Lee Blauner, the club manager, who has had 23 years' experience in initiating and managing such clubs as Rye Wood, Rye, N.Y., Pine Country Club of New Jersey, Westwood, N.J., and many more.

Lee will have a staff of 16 to 18 persons working under him at the clubhouse. These include a housekeeper and three maids upstairs, two housemen for inside maintenance, two bartenders, two locker room attendants, a lifeguard-swimming instructor, a maitre d' and waitresses as

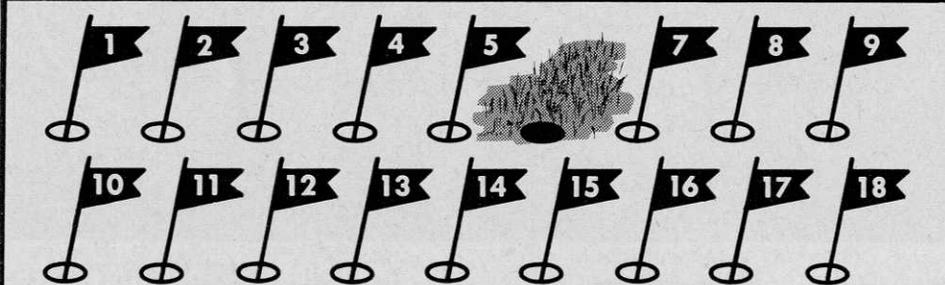
needed, a chef, assistant chef, kitchenman, saladman and dishwasher. The majority of these people will be employed on a 12-month basis.

This staff will service a membership of 300 people and their guests. Currently, over 200 members have signed up, and it looks like the club will have a full quota in the very near future.

In fact, when Lee Blauner was asked how the room accommodation situation was going to work, he stated that it "looks like we won't have any room available. As it is, some of the members who in the past used to rent summer cottages in the area, have booked permanent reservations at the club for the entire summer season instead of renting summer cottages." Other members have taken rooms for the season for weekends only.

Lee seems to have worked out a smooth plan for running the clubhouse that will offer as many modern conveniences and comforts to the members with the least

continued on page 56



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LOCH LEDGE

continued from page 54

obvious effort. And, as is usual at most clubs, he will work with a social and entertainment member committee for future social events at the club.

Up at the ski lodge, Harry Lewis has hired Bud Woller, formerly with Silver Mine Lodge, as manager under Lee Blauer's supervision.

In the summer, the lodge will be used as a day camp for children of the members. There will be counselors to supervise the children and to take them down to the clubhouse for swimming during the "children's hour," at the pool. Otherwise, the pool will be for adult members only.

During the winter, the lodge will function as a ski lodge with an attractive cafeteria, ski shop and barroom. There will be two ski instructors, in attendance, Egon Zimmerman and Penny Patou.

The barroom at the lodge was formerly a chapel and right above the bar is a

stained glass window which was originally the organ loft. This has been converted into the ladies' powder room. The barroom also has a huge walk-in fireplace with an intimate seating arrangement in front of it.

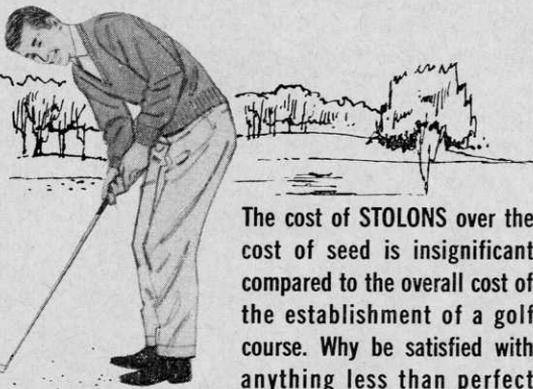
The chapel was originally connected to a house with a covered runway which sported another fireplace, Byzantine columns, and flagstone walk with three steps leading up to a stone fountain with three bronze ladies. This all has been kept intact and closed-in on one side with huge glass picture windows, and the steps, on the other side, lead into the newly constructed cafeteria and ski shop which all go to comprise the ski lodge.

The lodge will be heated with gas infra-red heating, which might be called "instant heat." This was installed in opposition to a new heating plant as it provides fast and efficient heat. An entire new heating plant would have required extensive and costly alterations, and a

continued on page 58

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LOCH LEDGE

continued from page 56

comparison study showed that this was not necessary.

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To transport skiers and equipment between the lodge and clubhouse, the same trolley that conveyed golfers to the range in the summer will be running a continued basis.

When it came to constructing his golf course, Harry hired Nat Squire, Golf

Course Architect, located in Hempstead, L.I., and together, they walked the area of the proposed course for one full week before a single hole was designed.

The result is an interesting, comfortable course of 6,040 yards (with a maximum of 6,500 yards) which includes 11 par fours, three par fives and four rather long par threes.

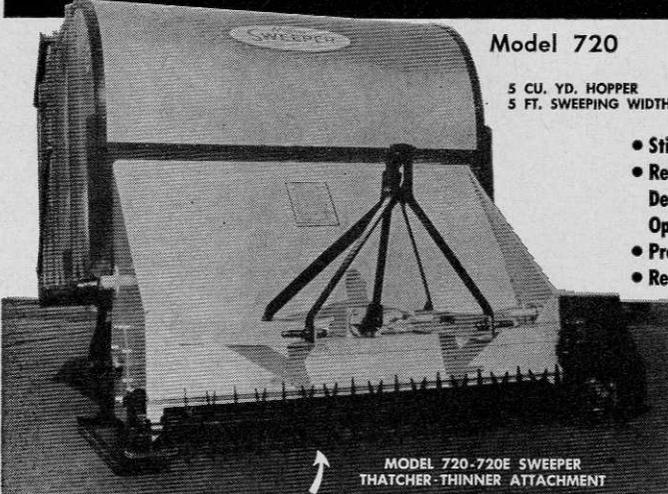
When asked why the par 3's were designed to be so long (172-198-210 and 220 yards), the reply was that since the course was relatively short, the long par 3's would add some interest and challenge to the course.

Mr. Squire used the grounds maintenance crew hired from the very beginning to build the course. These men, 11 to 14 in number, will maintain the course during the playing season, and will switch to the ski slopes during the winter months, thus assuring them 12 months' work during the year.

Harry Lewis was quick to point out that
continued on page 62



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LOCH LEDGE

continued from page 58

this, in itself, was important since many clubs which only employ their ground crews for eight or 10 months, lose them from season to season. Employing his men for a full year will enable him to keep a permanent staff, which, in turn, will give better service to his members.

Under Mr. Squire's direction, the course was literally blasted from the hilly, rocky terrain. In fact, some 50,000 square yards of rock were blasted out—10,000 square yards on hole No. 5 alone.

Trees, growing naturally, were left to separate the fairways, some of which are designed around natural fresh water-fed ponds. One interesting par 3 is played over a rather deep ravine. On No. 5, you drive off an elevated tee downhill, then on your second shot, you have to carry a pond directly in front of the green. If you overshoot the green, there is a trap directly behind which is backed by a rising grass bank.

The Loch Ledge area has a fine natural water reserve, fed by underground rivers, which naturally dispenses water through the course. However, to insure proper watering of the course at all times, an irrigation system has been built into the tees, fairways and greens which is fully automatic and is controlled from a control panel center.

Every possible natural feature of the area has been incorporated into the design of the course to make it as interesting and comfortable, yet, challenging to the members of the club.

Harry Lewis has hired Pete Donnelly as pro for the club. Pete has had a solid background to qualify him for this position. He has been a caddy, sold golf sportswear, been a touring pro, was assistant pro at Fenway Golf Course, and, thus, having been on both sides of the fence so to speak, is ready, willing and able to be of service to his members.

Pete's schedule calls for lessons with members on weekday mornings, playing with members and their guests (no

continued on page 64

GOLFDOM

For more information circle number 153 on card —>

LOCH LEDGE

continued from page 62

charge) during the afternoons.

Lessons will be given on a full-length driving range at the foot of three slopes used for skiing in the winter. A range boy will be in attendance all day for members wishing to warm up and practice on the driving range.

The range, which is a five-minute walk, or a one-minute ride from the clubhouse, is serviced by a motor-driven trolley-car train, operated by a man whose sole job is to transport members to and from the range and clubhouse on a continuous basis. During the winter, the same trolley will transport skiers and their equipment to the lifts and lodge.

Golf cars will be available to the members. A permanent member of the grounds crew will service these cars and other grounds machinery.

So there you have it—a country club that offers golfing, swimming, and tennis

in the summer, and skiing and swimming in the winter—a real year-round club.

It is most apparent that the trend for today's new country clubs is more than just providing summer recreation. They are country clubs operated on a year-round basis, providing as many modern conveniences and summer and winter recreational features as the area will allow. Loch Ledge is a perfect example of this. ●

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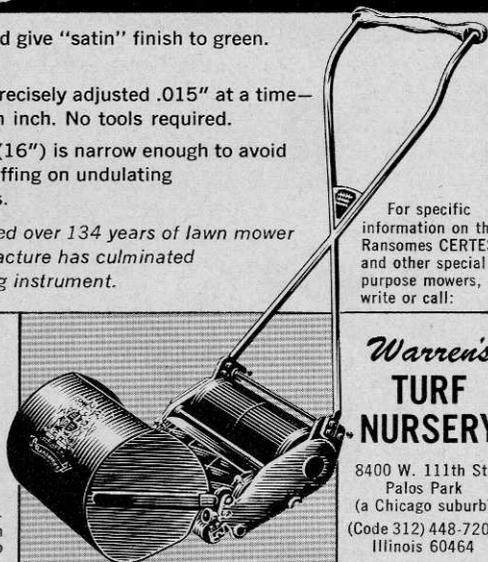
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