

Glen Oaks Conversion From War Use Is Big Job

By JOHN BRENNAN

The atomic bomb indirectly led to the biggest reconversion job in American golf.

Glen Oaks club, located among the picturesque hills of Long Island's famous Gold Coast, in the Great Neck area, is just getting back to normal for the first time since early 1942 when Uncle Sam's Army asked officials for possession of their clubhouse, largest on Long Island, for the duration of the war.

Actually, work on the atomic bomb didn't start at Glen Oaks until after the Navy acquired the clubhouse in 1943. The Army used Glen Oaks as a base for its barrage balloons which dotted the skies from Great Neck to Suffolk County. When the balloons were hauled down, the Army yielded Glen Oaks to the Navy and Hazeltine's electronic experts and atomic physicists.

The gorgeous \$2,000,000 clubhouse, which was christened during a lavish party at which the late James J. Walker, then mayor of New York City, was toastmaster, was completely denuded to make room for the scientific instruments of the atomic experts. More than 2,200 scientists and technical wizards worked in the big clubhouse. A 15-foot steel fence was rigged up around the clubhouse and guards stationed every few yards on a 24-hour basis. That was a picture of Glen Oaks clubhouse during the war years.

With no clubhouse, the members of Glen Oaks were lucky enough to lease nearby Lakeville GC, located in Great Neck, for a three-year period from the Prudence Co., owner of the vast tract that was built at a cost of \$4,000,000 and was acquired last year by Fresh Meadow CC for less than a million.

Dynamic Spencer Murphy, one of the most capable professionals in the country, astutely directed the moving operations to Lakeville and operated the Glen Oaks course as a pay-as-you-play enterprise for



Glen Oaks entrance. Clubhouse used as war factory to experiment with atomic bomb now restored to members.

the three trying war years when his own members dug divots at Lakeville. In order to provide shelter for the patrons of the temporary public course at Glen Oaks, Spencer had to buy a small-sized war factory building not being used by Sperry and have it transported some four miles to Great Neck.

Plan to Make Club "No. 1"

After the atomic bombing of the Japanese cities brought the war to an end, Glen Oaks was confronted with a gigantic rehabilitation and reconversion job—to say nothing of reconstructing a course that, due to the exigencies of war, had been neglected.

When notified by the Navy that their clubhouse would again become available for use, Glen Oaks officials, who, incidentally, led the nation in raising funds for the USO, Red Cross and other service funds, decided to transform what was left after the scientists moved out into the top-flight golfing layout in the district.

With money no great concern Glen Oaks has accomplished its goal or will within another few months when its outdoor nata-

torium is completed. The cost of rehabilitating the clubhouse, grounds and making added improvements, including the acquisition of 12 adjoining acres to make room for a mammoth driving range, will most likely run beyond \$500,000 in the opinion of Spencer Murphy, director of most of the work.

When the electronic and atomic experts departed Glen Oaks clubhouse resembled a vast architect's office, with drawing boards all over the place. Costly, imported rugs, exquisite furniture and other embellishments which had been there the gay night Jimmy Walker, along with Supreme Court Justices Mitchell May and Aaron Nova, spoke so eloquently concerning the future of the club, were gone.

So, it was a big job for Glen Oaks to re-carpet the vast floors, restore the gorgeous furniture, paintings, and all equipment needed by a top grade club. Even the lockers had to be bought for the postwar era. It already has cost well over \$150,000 to reburnish the clubhouse alone. It required the services of 125 skilled electricians, carpenters, painters and allied technicians to restore the clubhouse to its former condition.

Leon Chock, green chairman, in 1945 outlined a comprehensive program for the first two years of the postwar period and within a few more months this vast work will have been completed.

Driving Range New Feature

In addition to constructing a driving range on the land recently acquired by a committee headed by Charles Margett, Long Island City attorney, a job, incident-

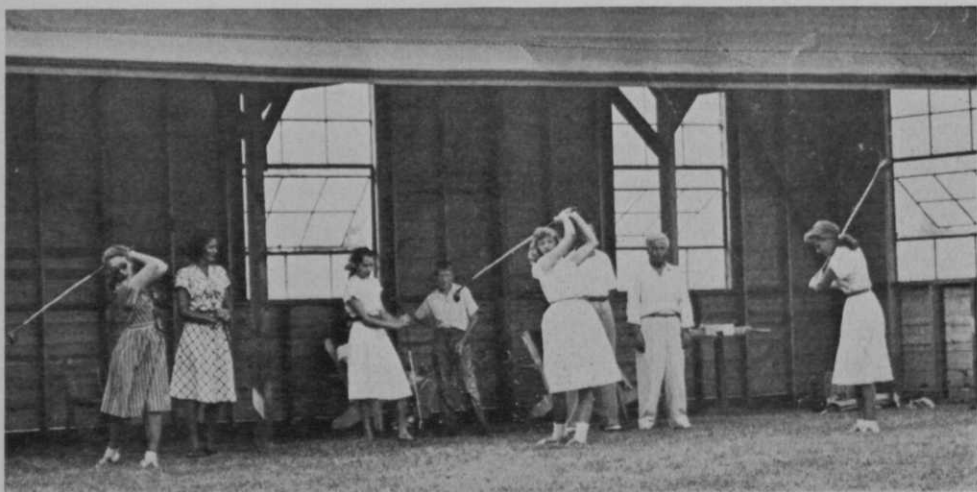
ally, which required the clearing of giant trees and other obstacles, Glen Oaks has completed the work of rebuilding the par-five 505-yard 16th hole, resodded every tee and built 18 additional tees to have reserve tees for weekends and holidays; modernized its giant pumping station and constructed two green clay tennis courts. The club's parking space also has been doubled.

The new driving range offers many unique features, including colored discs in the fairway. These discs, each suspended high in the air, indicate the yardage. The key to the colors is displayed on a sign near a shed that extends the full length of a 200-foot teeing ground.

The job of removing a hill, or hump, on the 16th fairway, cost \$12,000 but Chairman Chock feels the money well spent inasmuch as the hole is a lot sportier and more sensible for the older members, the majority of whom disliked mountain climbing so far out on the course.

Another improvement was the construction of a putting course near the first tee. This vast area was reseeded two years ago and now is being used on weekends. The area is surrounded with hedge and adds to the beauty of the area in front of the pro shop, one of the busiest in the country.

Glen Oaks' greens are mostly a combination of velvet, German and Astoria bent, with fairways and tees well filled with fescues and Kentucky blue. For some unknown reason, the Great Neck club has been immune to the poa annua which has plagued other Long Island courses, including nearby Lakeville and Fresh Meadow.



Part of 200-foot shelter constructed on new driving range at Glen Oaks Club, Great Neck, L.I. Roslyn (Cookie) Swift, who won Metropolitan junior title at Cedar Creek, is at right. Ed (Senator) Murphy is to her left. Others are members.



Approaching 18th green at rejuvenated Glen Oaks. Newly installed tennis courts in background.

Although Spencer Murphy spent the long, monotonous hours seeing that progress was being made in the transformation of the Glen Oaks club from war factory to a golfing paradise, men like Leo Goldberger, M. Lester Mendell, Joe Getz, B. T. Baron, A. D. Emil, Nat Judson, Joe Eaton, Dave Weinstein, Sam Gerstein, Chock and Margett were instrumental in

achieving the feat of Glen Oaks' rebirth.

In discussing the outstanding job being consummated at Glen Oaks, Murphy said he's getting used to moving about at Great Neck. "Why, back in 1928, four years after I took over the job when Leo Diegel resigned, I had to arrange moving from the old clubhouse, the former Vanderbilt mansion, to the present quarters, which, incidentally, are located in New York City while most of the course is outside—in Nassau County," declared Spencer.

"We're lucky those atomic bomb boys quit when they did, or we might have been arranging to move again—if one exploded," suggested Spencer's brother, Ed (Senator) Murphy, who does most of the teaching along with Pete Burke, younger brother of Billy, the ex-national open king.

The decks should be glittering when Glen Oaks embarks on its second half century next season.



Ed Murphy and Alice Sakin of Great Neck study key to discs in new practice range fairway. Different colors, each reflected, give yardage.

JERSEY MANAGERS HOST TO BOSSES—New Jersey chapter, Club Managers' Assn. will have a day's outing for members, their presidents and house chairmen at Essex Falls (N.J.) CC Oct. 7. There'll be golf in the afternoon with prizes for managers, presidents and chairmen and a dinner with brief spiels in the evening. J. J. Bond, Preakness Hills CC, Paterson, N.J., is pres. of the N.J. chapter.

Courtesy and Personal Interest Always Pay Dividends

By **LARRY GLEASON**

Pro at Visitors' Country Club, Catalina Island

There's nothing more pleasing than to be greeted with a handshake by someone who can recall your name, your home town or with a "how's that big boy of yours?" after months or maybe even years of absence from your favorite vacation haunt, beach or mountain resort.

That, to me, is the very first requirement for a successful golf professional or pro-manager at the country club in a resort area.

Make people feel as though you personally are glad to see them again, show personal interest in their comfort, their welfare, their family and in their golf, but since, in most cases, the resort visitor is on vacation, guard against overdoing the attention.

Give your visitor welcome courtesy, a cordial greeting, let him feel you want sincerely to serve him, then leave him to his enjoyment. See that he gets it, if possible, without having been a pest.

Conducting a pro shop in a resort area, or in my particular setup here at Catalina Visitors' Country Club at Santa Catalina Island, a pro-manager combination, is different in many ways from the usual pro situation.

To my way of thinking, it embodies all the problems of pros from every section of the country, because the resort golfer comes from coast-to-coast and from border-to-border. He's from the public course, the private course; he's from the small town, the large city; he's rich and he's poor.

It's a more cosmopolitan clientele than the average club will have, and the pro should keep that fact in mind.

Thus, a resort pro is required to carry a wider range of merchandise.

I have found it advisable to divide my shop merchandise somewhat, with Class-A or high grade and higher-priced material on one side of the shop, and general merchandise on the other.

Resort merchandising is a lot like that in a big chain store, people have a wide range of ideas on price, and feel embarrassed if they pick out a club which sells for \$15 when they only wanted to pay \$7.50.

Display of merchandise and prices should be such as to allow each visitor to choose his own price level.

This insures against embarrassment for both visitor and pro, saves the pro time in explanation of the reason for difference in price and quality, which causes confusion, and enables the visitor to go right to his price range, and the pro to work from that point in fitting his customer to clubs or other merchandise.

Some resorts raise prices on merchandise. This should not be done. Keep within the catalogue, and the value of such practice will pay off in making your visitor feel more at home—as though he were at his own club—and less like he's being fleeced.

Visitors should always be given courtesy and course privileges over the regular or resident golfers at a resort, and the resident golfer should be made to realize the reason.

Here in Catalina we have a situation which is similar to that in most of our golfing resort districts—a private club within a public club.

The private club, of course, is comprised of residents of the area—but the course is open to the public, or the vacationing visitor.

Our members from the City of Avalon realize that much of their livelihood is dependent upon the treatment visitors receive when they are playing the course, and that the assurance of that visitor's return is coupled closely with that personal interest, courtesy and course privilege which we try to give them.

During the busy season, the resident members are most cooperative in giving way to the visitor, and even in filling out foursomes to aid in the sociability of the country club program.

The pro shop should be in a conspicuous spot, so that when people arrive for their golf, it's the first haven for information.

This gives the pro or pro-manager a chance to greet the visitor, show him through the shop, lounge and clubhouse, give him that necessary personal interest and attention, and then introduce him to the lockerroom attendant.

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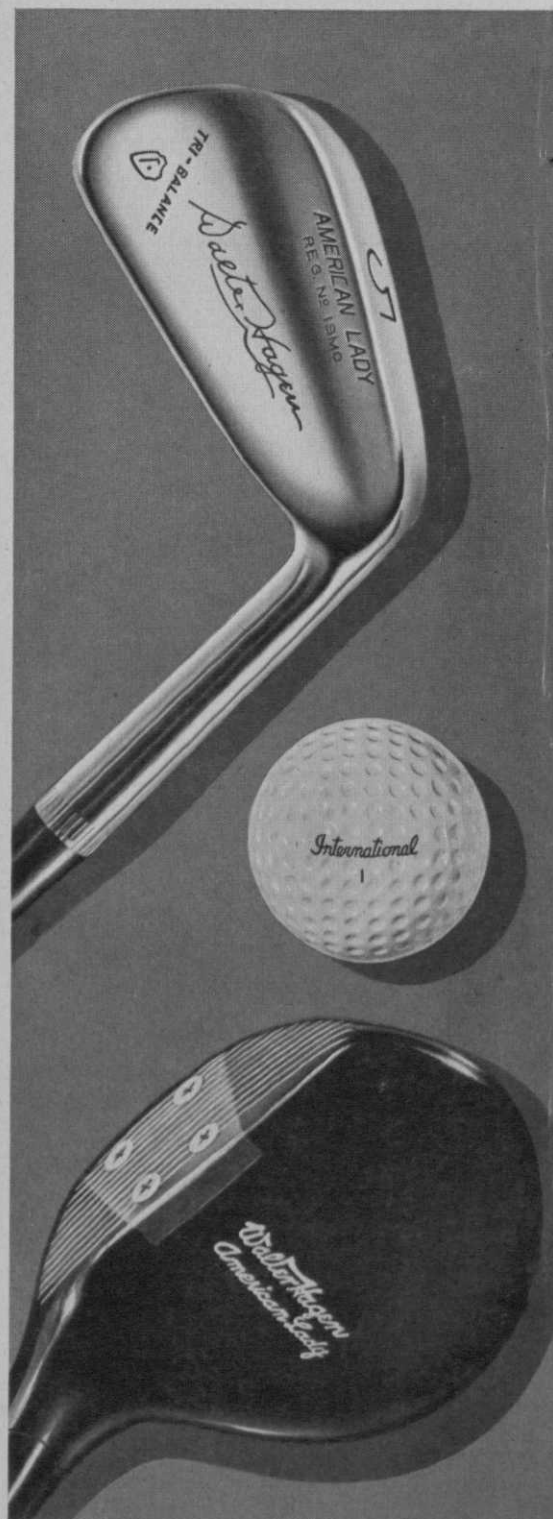
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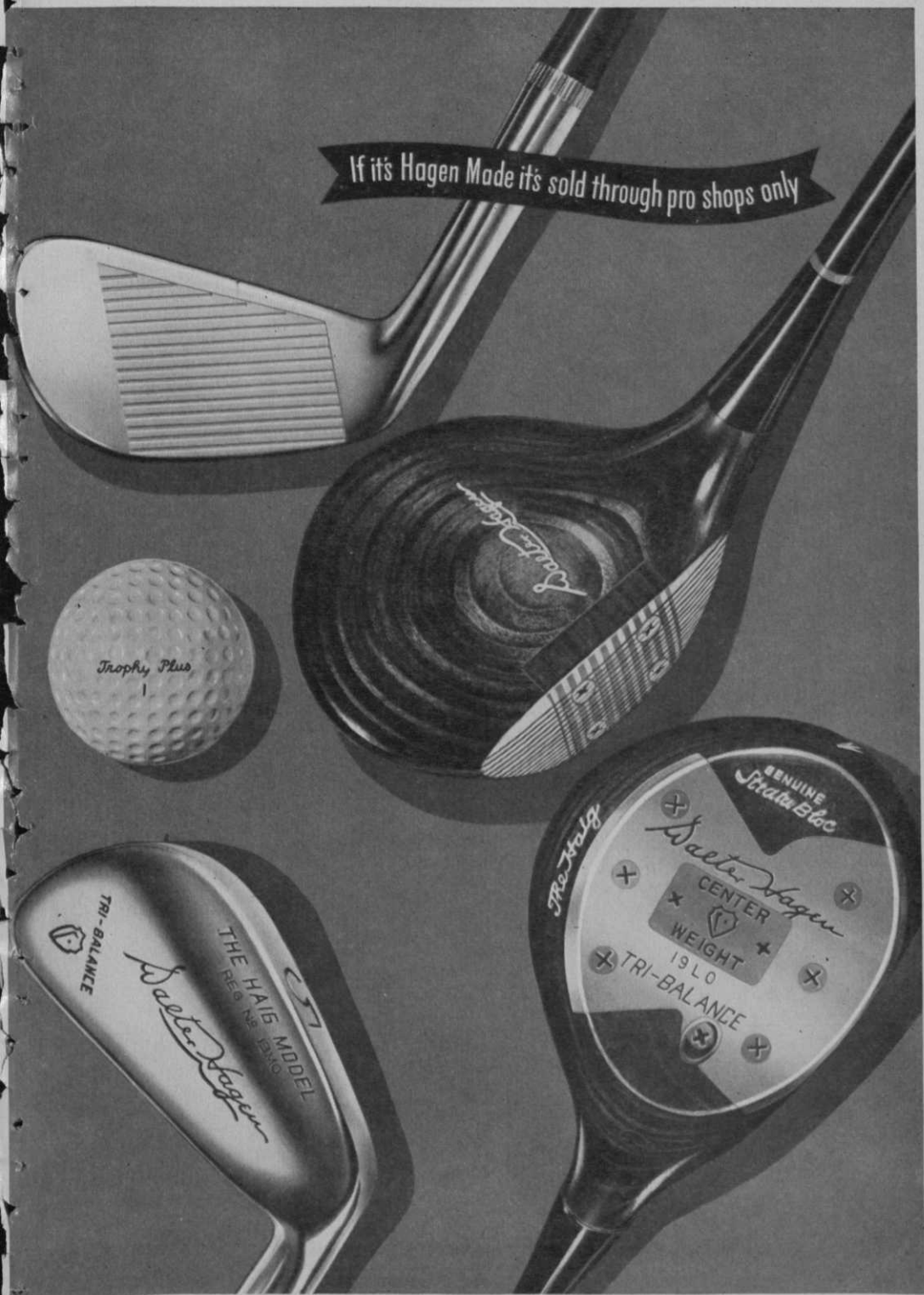
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We are most fortunate here at Catalina in having with us a young man (he's only 62) who has been with the Santa Catalina Island Company for 21 years and he is proud to say he never forgets a face or a name. His name is Clarence Fullbright.

'Tis said that Clarence personally knows more sports, theatrical, business or social celebrities than any other Negro lad in this country. Therefore, he has acquired a certain refreshing philosophy which is something to be cogitated these days.

He has proved most helpful and gracious in my short span here in Catalina, since he can and does greet everyone who appears at the club by their names, knows their home towns and often even has something of personal interest to contribute to the conversation.

That's why my entire staff is working on "memory courses." We have seen how pleased people are merely to be remembered.

One way which I have devised toward fostering good memories is to keep a visitor's record, which is complete to address, home town and club—and then to study that record each evening in an effort to recall each visitor. This makes for accurate recollection the next day, and next week or next month.

I advise a distinctive uniform, with neat appearance a necessity, for all attendants.

This makes for orderly attire of the official staff at the club, and enables the visitor to know the people who are there to serve them.

There are more beginners playing golf at a vacation area than at the average club, and for this reason I suggest that wherever possible the pro work toward establishment of a driving range or a pitch and putt course.

This will aid materially in the golf pleasure and instruction of the beginner, and in some cases will relieve the play-pressure of a beginner on a crowded course.

However, there's still the situation of a beginner being more willing to try something new, like playing golf, since, when they are out for vacation fun, they more readily agree to attempting the sport. In front of friends at home, they feel embarrassed. During a vacation, many realize that others are in the same boat, and feel less conspicuous.

I carry two grades of rent sets, one for the beginner at 50c all day, and the other for more advanced golfers at a dollar.

In Catalina, we have an all-day green fee of \$1.50, the idea being that the visitor will play more golf if he can spend the day

at it, than if he had to dig deep every time around.

Lockerroom rental, also, should be reasonable, as near as possible to the average of the visitor's home club price.

All of which boils down to the simple suggestion that if you make your visitor feel at home, he'll want to come back; if you don't over-charge him, he'll be grateful, because in so many places that's common practice. If you give one and all the same personal attention and service, it makes him feel pleased and if he's pleased, you can rest assured, he'll come back again.

RYDER CUP MATCHES NOV. 1 AND 2 AT PORTLAND (ORE.) GC

Ryder Cup matches between U. S. and British pros will be resumed Nov. 1 and 2 at Portland (Ore.) GC. Bob Hudson, Portland grocery magnate and golf official who promoted the highly successful 1946 PGA championship at the Portland GC and has been spark-plug of Portland open events on the tournament circuit got the event set after difficulty of U. S. and British pro officials in making mutually satisfactory arrangements.

The first postwar Ryder Cup matches will not have as team members the U. S. PGA champion, Jim Ferrier; or two of the top stars on the British pro summer circuit, Von Nida and Van Donck. Ferrier and Von Nida are Australians and Van Donck's a Belgian. Foreign-born players are ineligible to the U. S. and British teams.

Members of the U. S. team will be chosen on point system by PGA. This system awards points for performances in various tournaments on the circuit which appraises some of the competitions as second-rate affairs.

Method of British selection of customary team of 10 men of whom eight will play in the single and double matches has not yet been announced to the British or American golfing public. Up to the end of July Von Nida led British tournament players with an average of 72.28 for 36 rounds. Daly was second with 72.55, Cotton third with 72.75 and Dai Rees fourth with 73.09. Van Donck was fifth with 73.75.

The Ryder Cup matches will come in the gap between the end of the summer and start of the winter circuit. With the energetic, smart and liberal Hudson promoting the event will make money. British players who have good chances of making the team have signified their intention of staying in the U. S. after Ryder Cup play to get winter circuit experience and a crack at the purses.

Making A Team of Green-Committee and Greenkeeper

By JAMES E. THOMAS

A few years back at a Club Relations Day meeting held in one of the golf centers of the country, a prominent speaker made the following remark: "The most expensive official around a golf club is the chairman of the grounds and greens committee." This statement is indisputably true if the chairman and his associates are newly appointed and are not familiar with modern course maintenance, nor have any inkling as to the problems involved in the conditioning or care of a golf course.

This very important group if properly qualified to do the work called for should be kept on the job as long as they are willing to serve. To appoint a new unseasoned body annually is extravagant administration. Those who are entrusted with this key post should be selected from both high and low handicap players. There should be new blood on the committee from time to time, but never a complete change and turnover; even then the new members should be in a minority until they have thoroughly learned the ropes.

The greenkeeping superintendent should be an ex-officio member and consultant as he is the man who has to understand and carry out the committee's plans. The president of the club is usually responsible for the appointment of the green-chairman and his co-workers. He would do well to consult with the club's greenkeeper as to what qualifications are desirable for the personnel to be appointed. After this committee has been selected, it should hold a meeting and decide upon a constructive program of sound maintenance plans that can be followed for several years, keeping in mind that the success or failure of the job is the responsibility of their superintendent. He has to put the plan into effect as money is provided, with the grounds committee serving as a connecting link with the club's membership.

The golf course superintendent of today is the hub of the maintenance wheel, and the committee and board of governors represent the spokes, while the rim is the entire membership. Nor should the golf professional be left out of the outline, his ideas and knowledge are very vital to all three of the units. He is also part of the wheel's center.

Too many committees and superintendents cater to the fancies of the par shoot-

ers yet most of the bills are paid by the duffers. The fact that one plays in the low 70s does not qualify him as an absolute authority on all matters pertaining to the golf course. His suggestions and comments should be heard along with those of the rest of the membership, and heeded if of a constructive nature. The course should be a fair test of skill for a good player, but never to the point where it is an ordeal for the ordinary golfer.

The average business man plays for pleasure, relaxation, and to enjoy the companionship of his friends. His game is soon spoiled if there are too many traps and hazards, heavy deep roughs, tricky putting greens with sharp undulating surfaces and angles, and to finish off the picture, long tiresome yardage. All of this often causes many a good and substantial member to go where conditions are easier.

The genius of greenkeeping lies in making the course conditions enjoyable. It must be borne in mind that for major championships courses are altered to such an extent as to make them utterly impossible for the average man to enjoy his play. The likes and dislikes of the majority should have first place in the minds of those who are responsible for the upkeep of the grounds but there must be wisely balanced representation given to both the par and the high-handicap shooter.

It is often advisable to eliminate traps that are poorly placed yet are considered landmarks. A walk around the course on a Monday morning would show that bunkers have not been played out of. Why not eliminate these unused hazards? To do so would bring about a substantial saving in the cost of sand and the release of labor for other vital work.

Heavy, deep, uncut grass in areas parallel to fairways need no longer exist with the special built mowers that are now available for mowing roughs. They cut at a height which permits the easy finding of a ball yet retain rough as an architectural feature. This in turn means faster playing, takes care of more golfers and relieves congestion on busy days.

Greens with steep grades from front to back, which cause a ball to gain momentum on a down hill putt, along with sharp undulations, also upset many a round.

(Continued on page 70)

Los Angeles Manages Its Golf As Big Business

By CHARLES CURTIS

The Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners of Los Angeles are promoting golf on a large and expanding scale.

At present the city's Recreation and Parks Department, which governs operation of golf and all recreational facilities in the city, has two full 18-hole courses (Wilson and Harding), a full yardage 9-hole course (Roosevelt) and a special pitch and putt course (Coolidge) in operation at the huge Griffith Park area in the northern sector of the city. It also is reconstructing the old Rancho course in the western part of the city and building an 18-hole golf course and a pitch and putt links on that site as well as developing 50 acres of playground facilities. These will be back in operation next year. The city also operates a small pitch and putt course (Holmby Park) in the Beverly Hills section.

Commissioner Maurie Luxford is chairman of all golf activities assisted by the General Manager George Hjelte and Park Superintendent Gilbert Skutt.

Since 1931, William H. (Bill) Johnson has been manager of L.A.'s golf operations and now in addition to directing activities at Griffith Park, he is supervising construction work at Rancho.

There is at present about \$320,000 in the city's golf fund, and two years ago \$250,000 of golf-earned funds were used to purchase the tax-deeded Rancho course.

Golf Operations in the Black

Golf operations are handled on a budget basis within the city's treasury. A monthly report showing golf expenditures including labor, materials and other costs as contrasted to income is prepared and the fiscal year which ended in July showed an excess of income over expenses for that 12-month period of about \$80,000.

Johnson directs operation of the clubhouse activities, including the starting window, and has an assistant manager who personally supervises course maintenance.

At the clubhouse are two senior golf



Players lined up at starter window seeking starting time for weekend play.